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ABSTRACT

This edition of "Education Week" highlights the report "Quality Counts 2002: Building Blocks for Success," which examines what states are doing to provide early learning experiences for young children; to ensure that those experiences are of high quality; to prepare and pay early childhood educators adequately; and to measure the results of early childhood programs. The report also examines states' commitment to kindergarten, the transition point into the formal public education system. The report is based on the premise that when it comes to early learning, quality counts, just as it does in K-12 education. Following an executive summary, the report is divided into three sections. The first section, "The Essential Elements," examines what it would take for states to build a system of early childhood education, the theme of this year's report. The second section, "Early-Childhood Policies," tracks state policies and indicators related to the theme. The third section, "The State of the States," includes more than 80 indicators of the health of each state's public education system.State-by-State updates summarize state policy changes in education over the past year. (HTH)

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Building Blocks For Success

State Efforts In Early-Childhood Education

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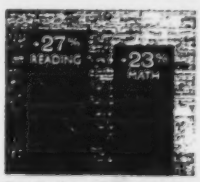

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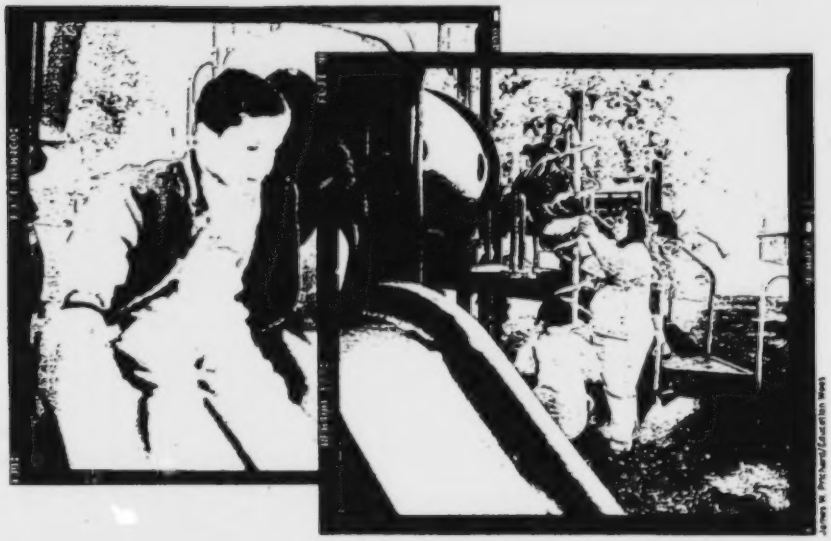

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QUALITY COUNTS 2002: BUILDING BLOCKS FOR SUCCESS

Quality Counts 2002: An *Education Week*/ Pew Charitable Trusts report on education in the 50 states.

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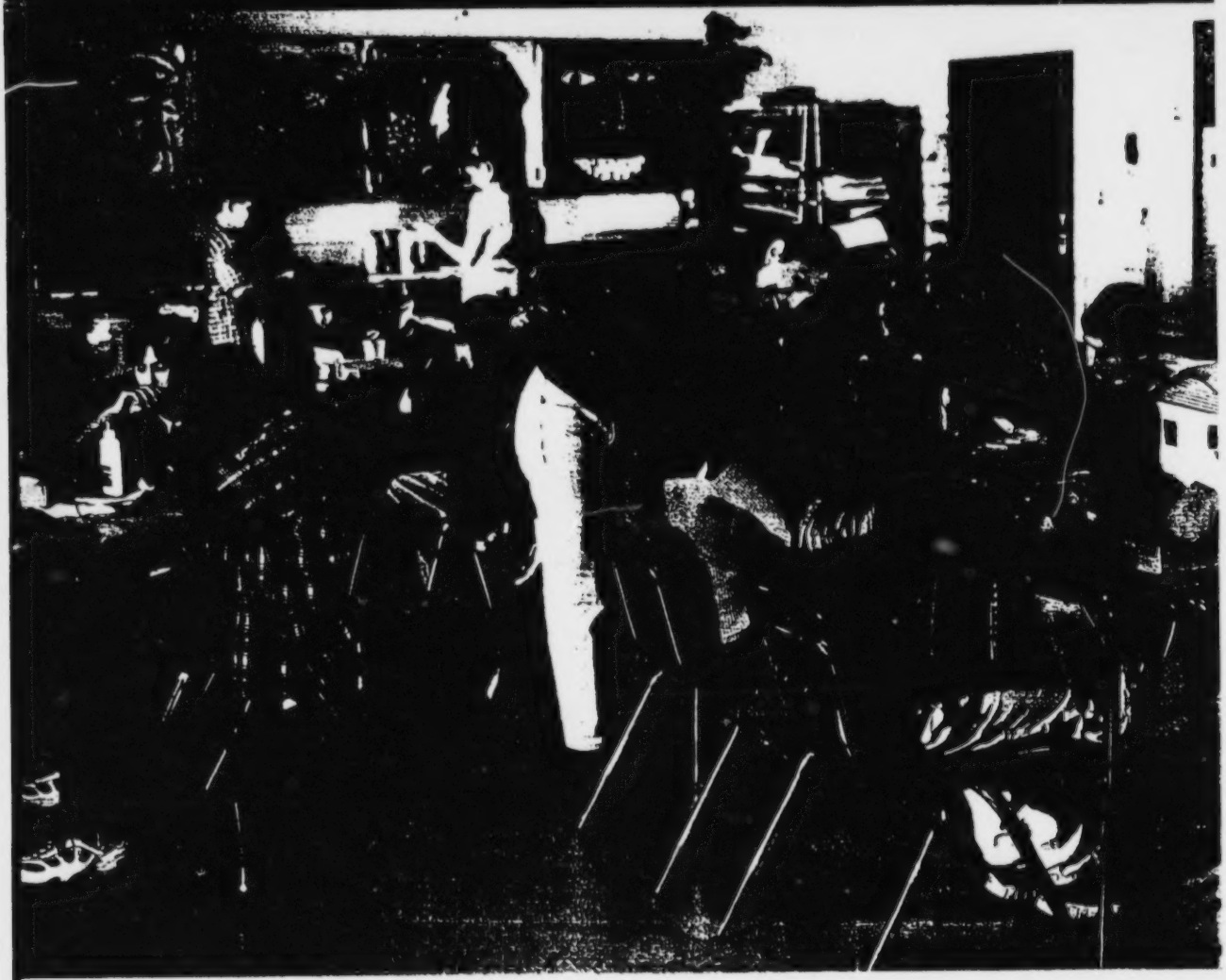

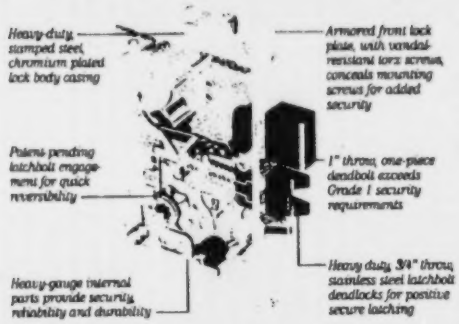
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In Early-Childhood Education and Care: Quality Counts

State interest in early learning is growing, but large gaps in access and quality remain.

Most Americans think education begins at age 5—with kindergarten.

But children are learning from the moment they're born. And for millions of youngsters, the reality is that their early learning is a joint enterprise between parents and early-childhood educators.

Today, 11.9 million children younger than 5 in the United States—or about six in 10—spend part of their waking hours in the care of people other than their parents: relatives, caregivers operating out of their homes, workers in child-care centers, Head Start staff members, and teachers in state-financed prekindergartens among them. The quality of the early care and education that young children receive in such settings sets the tenor of their days and lays the building blocks for future academic success.

Studies conclude that early-childhood education makes a difference. Young children exposed to high-quality settings exhibit better language and mathematics skills, better cognitive and social skills, and better relationships with classmates than do children in lower-quality care. Evaluations of well-run early-learning programs also have found that children in those environments were less likely to drop out of school, repeat grades, need special education, or get into future trouble with the law than similar children who did not have such exposure.

Quality Counts 2002: Building Blocks for Success examines what states are doing to provide early-learning experiences for young children; to ensure that those experiences are of high quality; to prepare and pay early-childhood educators adequately; and to measure the results of early-childhood programs. The report also examines states' commitment to kindergarten, the transition point into the formal public education system. The report is based on the premise that when it comes to early learning, quality counts, just as it does in K-12 education.

Increasingly, states are getting that message. Today, every state subsidizes kindergarten in at least some districts or for a portion of the school day, according to a survey conducted by *Education Week* for *Quality Counts*. Twenty-five states pay for kindergarten for the full school day, at least in districts that opt to offer such services. So does the District of Columbia.

But nine states—Alaska, Colorado, Idaho, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, and Pennsylvania—still do not require districts to offer kindergarten.

Thirty-nine states and the District of Columbia provide state-financed prekindergarten for at least some of their 3- to 5-year-olds, up from about 10 in 1980. Annual state spending for such programs now exceeds $1.9 billion.

In 2000, 21 states and the District of Columbia supplemented federal aid to serve additional children through Head Start, one of the nation's largest preschool programs for disadvantaged 3- to 5-year-olds. Thirty-one states underwrite one or more programs for infants and toddlers, up from 24 in 1998.

In addition, every state helps at least some low-income families buy child care through a combination of state and federal money under the Child Care and Development Fund block grant and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. Twenty-six states, the District of Columbia, and the federal government also help families pay for child care through tax credits or deductions. But only 10 states made the credits refundable in the 2001 tax year so that the lowest-income families could benefit.

Despite federal and state efforts, access to high-quality early-childhood education remains out of the reach of many families. None of the federal programs reaches more than a fraction of the newborns to 5-year-olds who could benefit from such services. And states' financial commitment to early-childhood education varies widely, as do eligibility requirements and the number of children who actually receive services.

Most states focus their prekindergarten efforts on the neediest youngsters. Twenty-six target children from low-income families; 15 of those also look at other risk factors, such as having a teenage parent. And nine states leave it up to local districts to determine which risk factors they will consider.

Only three states—Georgia, New York, and Oklahoma—and the District of Columbia are phasing in prekindergarten for any 4-year-old whose parent wants it, regardless of income.

Similarly, although all states provide child-care subsidies for at least some poor families, wide variations exist in the income limits that families must meet to qualify, the actual dollar amount of the subsidies, and the percentage of eligible children served.

Families with low incomes, particularly the working poor, have the least access to high-quality early-childhood services.

Traditionally, "quality" in early-childhood education has meant ensuring that children are cared for in a safe and nurturing environment. State licensing standards commonly address group size, the number of children per caregiver, and such physical features as the height of playground equipment. Licensing standards rarely, if ever, address the learning aspects of early care and education.

Even those minimal protections often fail to safeguard children adequately. In many states, certain settings are exempt from licensure entirely: family child-care homes that serve a small number of children, preschools that operate only a few hours a day, or sites run by religious organizations.

New research about the importance of early learning, however, has led some states to describe the qual-

ity of instruction that should occur in preschool settings, at least for programs that receive state money. While almost all states have standards for students in elementary school, only 19 states and the District of Columbia lay out specific expectations for kindergartners. Fifteen states and the District have specific standards for prekindergarten. Five more states are working on such standards. Only six states—California, Connecticut, Georgia, Maryland, Michigan, and Washington—require preschool programs to adhere to the standards. In addition, seven states require their state-financed prekindergartens to satisfy federal Head Start standards.

States also are mounting efforts to improve the quality of early-childhood programs. Seven require their prekindergarten programs to earn accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Twenty-six states and the District of Columbia offer tiered reimbursement rates that provide higher child-care subsidies to providers that earn national accreditation or meet other quality criteria.

But states still have a long way to go to ensure that those who work with young children are well-educated and well-compensated.

As a nation, the United States pays about as much to parking-lot attendants and dry-cleaning workers as it does to early-childhood educators, according to data from the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics. The average annual salary of child-care workers in 1999 was $15,430. Preschool teachers, who typically work with 3- to 5-year-olds, had annual salaries of $19,610, less than half what the average elementary school teacher earned.

Not surprisingly, given those numbers, turnover among early-childhood workers is high, and education requirements are minimal. Every state, for example, requires kindergarten teachers to have at least a bachelor's degree and a certificate in elementary or early-childhood education. But only 20 states and the District of Columbia require teachers in state-financed prekindergartens to meet similar requirements. In 30 states, teachers in child-care centers can begin work without having any preservice training.

Recently, states and the federal government have begun to get more serious about the preparation of early-childhood educators.

Congress has ordered that by 2003, 50 percent of a Head Start program's teachers must have an associate's degree in early-childhood education. A growing number of states also have initiatives either to help providers acquire more education or to supplement their wages. The TEACH Early Childhood Project, which began in North Carolina in 1990, provides scholarships to child-care workers to attend school and bonuses or raises from their employers when they complete their programs of study. Seventeen additional states have since adopted the program. Nine states have programs to improve the compensation of early-childhood educators.

States' growing investments in the early years, and their concerns about school readiness, also have led them to revisit the question of how to measure the success or failure of their early-childhood initiatives. Today, 17 states mandate readiness testing of kindergartners as a first step in identifying children with special needs or to help plan instruction. Six states use kindergarten testing to gauge school readiness statewide. Fifteen states and the District of Columbia require diagnostic or developmental testing of prekindergartners. At the federal level, new performance measures are being used to evaluate Head Start programs, including their impact on children's math and literacy skills.

Efforts also are under way to rethink how states pay for early care and education. Many states, for instance, are seeking new sources of money to support their efforts, such as beer and cigarette taxes or state lottery proceeds.

Despite the economic downturn, many believe that the continued push for better academic performance in the elementary years could well compel states to pay more attention to early learning for years to come.

This year's edition of *Quality Counts* also charts the progress in other facets of educational improvement in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. In addition to presenting the latest data on student achievement, it grades the states in three areas: standards and accountability, efforts to improve teacher quality, and resources. This year, states averaged a C across those categories. *Quality Counts* also includes indicators on school climate, but does not grade states in that category this year because the indicators are being revised. Additional ungraded indicators are on the Web at www.edweek.org/qc.

Quality Counts 2002 is divided into three sections. "The Essential Elements" examines what it would take for states to build a system of early-childhood education, the theme of this year's report. "Early-Childhood Policies" tracks state policies and indicators related to the theme. "The State of the States" includes more than 80 indicators of the health of each state's public education system. State-by-state updates summarize state policy changes in education over the past year.

-THE EDITORS

Quality Counts is produced with support from the Pew Charitable Trusts.

Starting Early

Children's experiences before kindergarten can help build a solid foundation for future learning.

BY LYNN OLSON

The day is just beginning in the Dinosaur Room at the Park Street Children's Center in Rockville, Md. Arriving parents sign their children in on a sheet posted inside the classroom door and scan the wall for news of upcoming events: David and Sara had birthdays this week. A field trip to a local fire station is planned. On the wall, in clear print, teacher Alexa Leffler has recorded individual children's ideas about firefighters on a piece of newsprint. "They live at the fire station, but they don't have beds, and they eat Popsicles." "They play all day." "They squirt water."

After hanging up their coats in child-size cubbies, the 3- and 4-year-olds begin to fan out around the room, where an array of choices awaits them.

Three children are off to one side, working on a large floor puzzle of a fire truck with Leffler. Nearby, a collection of rain boots, hats, hoses, and other fire and rescue equipment spills out of a plastic crate onto the floor. Some boys are taking turns racing miniature toy cars through a long cardboard tube, watching how fast the vehicles go as they tilt the tube upward.

At the art table, children attack pieces of paper with tape and blunt-edged scissors, with the help of an assistant teacher. Several children are preparing to put on a puppet show in a large castle tucked into a corner beside the housekeeping area. Talya, a slim blonde wearing protective goggles and carting around a piece of rubber hosing, circles the room's perimeter dousing imaginary flames.

During a typical week, 11.9 million preschoolers, or about six in 10 children younger than 5 in the United States, spend part of their waking hours in the care of someone other than their parents. Some spend their time with relatives or in a caregiver's own home. Others attend for-profit or nonprofit child-care centers, Head Start programs, or state-financed prekindergartens. Many will be in several such places over the course of a day. On average, young children spend 30 hours a week in such care.

What happens to youngsters during those hours, and the quality of the care and education they receive, help shape the future course of their lives.

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Two- and 3-year-olds, called "tadpoles," play at the Park Street Children's Center in Rockville, Md.

"The reality is that learning does not begin when kids are age 5. Learning begins well before they enter the schoolhouse," says Sharon Lynn Kagan, a professor of early-childhood and family policy at Teachers College, Columbia University. "And what happens to children in their early years has profound impacts on the kind of entering students they will be."

Research suggests, for example, that the precursors to literacy start at a much earlier age than once assumed. During a White House summit on early learning last summer, G. Reid Lyon, the chief of the child-development and -behavior branch at the National Institutes of Health, argued: "There is a remarkably strong and stable link between what preschool kids know about words, sounds, letters, and print, and later academic performance."

Studies confirm that high-quality early-childhood education makes a difference. Evaluations of such programs as the High/Scope Perry Preschool Project, the North Carolina Abecedarian Project, and the Chicago Child-Parent Centers have found that youngsters who had participated in those programs were less likely to drop out of school, repeat grades, need special education, or get into trouble with the law than similar children who had not taken part.

The "Cost, Quality, and Outcomes" study, a longitudinal study conducted by researchers in four states, has examined the development of children in center-based programs through grade 2. It has found that young children cared for in high-quality settings displayed better language and mathematics skills, better cognitive and social skills, and better relationships with classmates than children who were in low-quality programs.

A study by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development from spring 2001 also reported that high-quality preschools can have positive effects on the language and math skills of young children, although long hours in care may make some children more aggressive. Evaluations of state-financed preschools have found similar benefits in readying young children for school and, in some cases, preventing retention in the early grades.

"The research is clear," says Gov. Jean Shaheen of New Hampshire, who last year headed an Education Commission of the States initiative to promote early care and education. "Children who have quality early-learning experiences will do better in school and later in life. Yet these early years receive the least amount of public attention and support," the Democrat says.

Quality Counts 2002: Building Blocks for Success examines what states are doing to provide early-learning experiences for young children; to ensure that those experiences are of high quality; to prepare and pay early-childhood educators adequately; and to measure the learning of young children in such settings. The report also examines states' commitment to kindergarten, the transition point for many into the formal public education system.

The report is based on the premise that when it comes to early learning, quality counts—just as it does in K-12 education. Wherever children are—with relatives or in family group homes, child-care centers, Head Start programs, state-subsidized preschools, or some combination—they all should have access to a caring and safe environment that promotes their physical, social, emotional, and cognitive growth. The challenge lies in how to ensure quality across this diverse array of settings and providers.

A Nonsystem of Care and Education

It's 9:30 a.m. at the Rosemount Center in the District of Columbia. The center is part of the federally subsidized Head Start program for 3- to 5-year-olds from low-income families.

In Carmen Benitez's room, children are gathered on the floor, getting ready to review the day's calendar. "OK," says Benitez, "who is our calendar person? Claudio." She holds up a small, laminated card with the word "Monday" written on it in black letters. "Yesterday was Monday," the teacher says, and then repeats the sentence in Spanish for the many Spanish-speaking children in the room. "Today is ..." She pauses. "Tuesday," Claudio replies. "Good job," says Benitez, as she hands the doe-eyed boy the card for Tuesday. "Can you say, 'Today is Tuesday'?" she asks the children. They repeat the sentence in English and then in Spanish.

Next, the group sings a song about the days of the week, while Claudio proudly attaches the cards for "Tuesday" in both languages to the top of the monthly calendar with Velcro. Then he counts the days of the month, to date, in English, while pointing to each number on the calendar. When he reaches the current date, Sept. 25, he adds that number to the calendar. Afterward, he repeats his counting in Spanish.

"Vente-cinco," says Benitez. "That's a big number. Wow." Together, the children sing the lyrics, "Today is 25 all day long," while Claudio dances, a huge grin on his face. "OK," says Benitez, "so today is Tuesday, September 25."

Educators often complain about the Byzantine structure of public schooling in the United States, which snakes throughout some 15,000 local districts. But the nation's system of elementary and secondary schools looks remarkably straightforward compared with the programs and funding sources for early-childhood education.

In fact, it would be more accurate to refer to the marketplace for early-childhood education and care in this

24 Defining Quality

34 Nurturing Caregivers

43 Adequate Financing

48 Measuring Results

Cathy Presson helps a preschooler hone his computer skills at the Double Oaks Pre-Kindergarten and Family Resource Center, part of the Bright Beginnings Pre-Kindergarten Program run by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg, N.C., school system.

country as a "nonsystem," in which most of the onus falls on families to find, pay for, and monitor the quality of the early learning their children receive.

Today, families pay about 60 percent of the costs of child care, government pays 39 percent, and the private sector contributes less than 1 percent. Despite a large jump in state efforts, federal spending still outpaces state spending on early care and education by about a 3-1 ratio. Coordinating those multiple federal, state, and private funding streams to provide high-quality services to children is a major challenge.

"Basically, this is a private-market system," explains Gina Adams, a senior research associate with the Urban Institute, a Washington think tank. "The government does two things. In some settings, they try to create a floor below which programs cannot fall," in the form of state licensing regulations for child care, she says.

"The other thing that government does is invest money to help families access the market. In a few cases," Adams says, "they actually put money out there to create new programs, like Head Start."

Traditionally, Washington has been the biggest government player in early-childhood education. Through such programs as Head Start, Early Head Start, Title I, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the federal government has provided money to help poor children and those with disabilities gain access to early-learning experiences.

In addition, the federal government helps states subsidize low-income families' ability to purchase child care in a wide range of settings through the Child Care and Development Fund and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, a block grant that states can use to finance varied welfare-reduction efforts. In 2000, states used almost $5 billion in TANF money for child care. Federal allocations to states for the CCDF block grant amounted to $4.4 billion in 2001.

"The federal welfare dollars have made an enormous difference in the ability of states to expand their child-care-subsidy systems over the last five years," says Mark H. Greenberg, a senior staff lawyer with the Center for Law and Social Policy, based in Washington. "They've been the biggest source of growth for state programs."

Both the TANF and CCDF block grants, however, are primarily designed to provide parents with child care so they can work or pursue training. The quality of care and education that children get through such subsidies has received less emphasis.

The tax codes of the federal government, 26 states, and the District of Columbia also provide some help to families in meeting their child-care needs through credits or deductions that parents can claim on their income-tax returns. But according to the Washington-based National Women's Law Center, only 10 states made the tax credits refundable for tax year 2001, so that the lowest-income families could benefit even when they owed no taxes.

It's on this chaotic playing field that states have leveraged their efforts, prompted by the growing number of working mothers, welfare reforms that require poor parents to seek employment, and concerns that children begin school ready to learn.

Today, every state pays for kindergarten in at least some districts or for a portion of the school day; 25 subsidize kindergarten for the full school day, at least in districts that opt to offer such services. So does the District of Columbia. But only eight states and the District require districts to offer full-day kindergarten.

Thirty-nine states and the District of Columbia offer state-financed prekindergarten for at least some of their 3- to 5-year-olds, up from about 10 in 1980. State spending for such programs now exceeds $1.9 billion annually. In addition, 21 states and the District of Columbia supplement federal Head Start dollars to serve that age group.

Thirty-one states pay for one or more programs for infants and toddlers, up from 24 in 1998. State spending on child-care subsidies also swelled significantly in the late 1990s, as the economy boomed and more parents entered the workforce. One study of 17 states by ABT Associates found a median increase of 78 percent in state spending on child care from fiscal 1997 to 1999.

"There's been a massive explosion of state involvement from the mid-1980s until now," says Walter S. Gilliam, an associate research scientist at the Yale University Child Study Center.

Problems With Access

Despite government efforts, access to high-quality early-childhood education remains out of the reach of many families.

None of the federal programs extends to more than a portion of the infants to 5-year-olds who could benefit from such services. Head Start serves about three in five eligible youngsters. Estimates are that only 12 percent of the almost 15 million children eligible for child-care subsidies under the CCDF actually received them in 1999; some of those children may be at least partially served through other programs, such as Head Start, Title I, Even Start, or state-financed prekindergarten programs.

States' financial commitment to early-childhood education also varies widely, as do eligibility requirements and the number of children who actually receive services.

"The reality is that learning does not begin when kids are age 5. Learning begins well before they enter the schoolhouse."

SHARON LYNN KAGAN, Professor of Early Childhood and Family Policy, Teachers College, Columbia University

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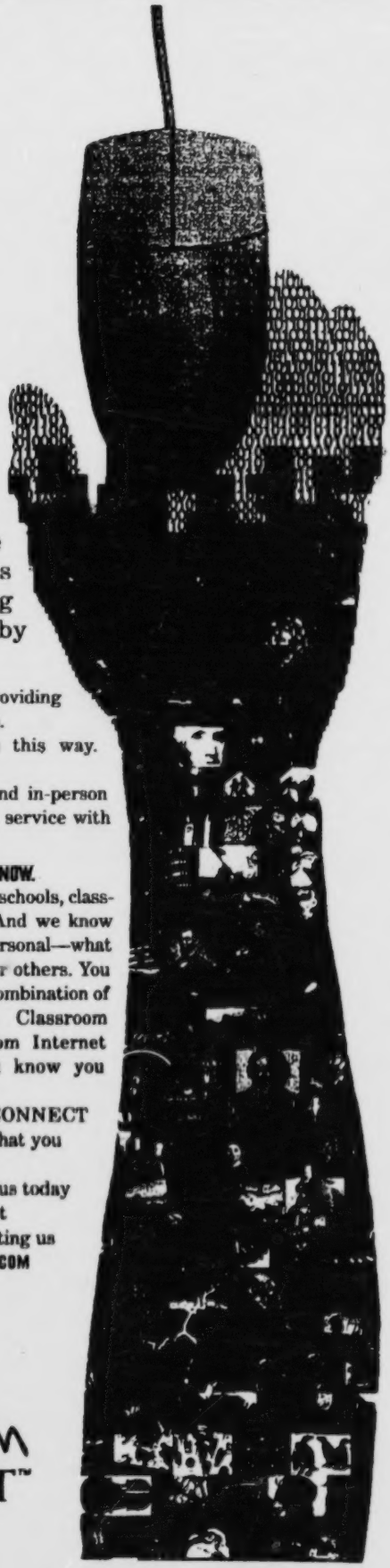

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State funding for prekindergarten in fiscal 2002 ranged from $1.5 million in Nebraska to $295 million in California. The proportion of 4-year-olds served ranged from under 2 percent in a pilot program in Alabama to more than half of all 4-year-olds in Georgia, and about 70 percent when Head Start participation was included.

Of the 39 states, plus the District of Columbia, with state-financed prekindergarten, most focus their efforts on the neediest youngsters. Twenty-six states target children from low-income families; 15 of those also look at other risk factors, such as having a teenage parent, and nine states leave it up to local districts to determine which risk factors they will consider.

Only three states—Georgia, New York, and Oklahoma—and the District of Columbia are phasing in prekindergarten for any 4-year-old whose family requests it, regardless of income. Three other states subsidize programs without special targeting provisions.

Similarly, although all states provide child-care subsidies for at least some needy families, wide variations exist in the income limits that families must meet to qualify for aid, the actual dollar amounts of the subsidies, and the percent of eligible children served.

The overlapping and often confusing mix of funding sources forces programs to respond to multiple, sometimes conflicting requirements. No state has a comprehensive system of early care and education that makes high-quality services available to all families of young children who want help.

As a result, families with low incomes, particularly the near-poor, have the least access to high-quality early-childhood services. Low-income families appear to be much more dependent on home care and on publicly financed settings, such as Head Start or state-subsidized preschools. But families just above the poverty line are often ineligible for such services.

Higher-income families are more likely to use private child-care centers, which, on average, cost about $5,000 a year in 1999, according to the National Household Education Survey, putting them out of the reach of working-poor families.

Low-wage families who purchase care also spend a greater proportion of their earnings on child care, according to a study released last year by the Urban Institute. Nationally, it found, families in which the youngest child was younger than 5 spent about 10 percent of their earnings on child care, or an average of $325 a month. Low-wage families spent an average of 16 percent of their earnings on child care, or $1 of every $6 earned.

The "Cost, Quality, and Outcomes" study found that seven in 10 child-care centers provided mediocre care; and one in eight provided care so inadequate that it threatened the health and safety of children.

Although youngsters whose mothers had only a high school education were more negatively affected by poor care—and more likely to benefit from high-quality care—such youngsters also tended to be in lower-quality classrooms.

Some of the worst shortages are in infant and toddler care. Today, 61 percent of mothers with children younger than 3, and more than half of mothers with infants younger than 1, are in the workforce.

Yet a report published last year by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation concluded, "Of all child-care services, care for infants and toddlers is the most scarce, expensive, and disappointing from a quality perspective."

Strongly conflicting public attitudes about the role of government in helping to nurture young children contribute to the uneven picture.

"There's no doubt that if the public were given its first wish, it would be that parents themselves would raise and educate their young children, especially for children 0 to 3," says Phil Sparks, the coordinator of the Washington-based Early Care and Education Collaborative, a coalition working to expand public support for programs for young children.

At the same time, he notes, polls show that the vast majority of the public realizes staying home with young children is not always an option, particularly for single mothers and low-income parents.

"The polling we've seen shows that about 48 percent to 52 percent of the public support major government ini-

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Georgia, New York, and Oklahoma Move Toward 'Universal' Preschool

BY LYNN OLSON

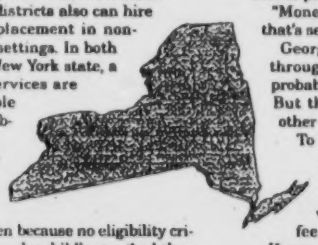
Wherever children live in the United States, and whatever their families' incomes, public schools are available free of charge.

The same is not true of early-childhood education.

But three states—Georgia, New York, and Oklahoma—and the District of Columbia are moving in that direction. They have made the commitment to phase in free, publicly financed prekindergarten for any 4-year-old whose parents want it, regardless of their income or work status.

In all three states, public schools may offer prekindergarten directly, or private schools, community agencies, Head Start programs, and nonprofit and for-profit child-care centers may provide services, as long as they meet state standards.

Oklahoma districts also can hire teachers for placement in non-public-school settings. In both Georgia and New York state, a majority of services are now available outside the public schools.



Such programs are often called "universal" prekindergarten because no eligibility criteria exist beyond a child's age. And they have often been promoted as a way to prepare all children for kindergarten on an equal footing.

But none of the programs is truly universal at this point.

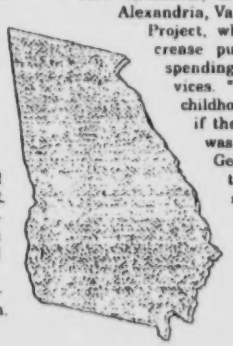
Georgia's program, which probably comes closest, currently serves more than 63,000 4-year-olds.

When combined with the enrollment in Head Start, about 70 percent of the 4-year-olds in the state are now in some form of publicly subsidized preschool.

While Georgia requires districts to offer prekindergarten, New York and Oklahoma have left it up to districts to decide whether they will provide such services with state funding.

"It's optional. It's available to all students, if it's offered," says David R. Denton, the director of school readiness for the Atlanta-based Southern Regional Education Board, "and that's a fundamental difference."

In Oklahoma, just over half of all 4-year-olds participate in the program. New York serves about one-quarter of its 4-year-olds.



Cost an Issue

One of the biggest issues in deciding to make such programs free to all families, of course, is cost. New York's universal prekindergarten program was supposed to reach every willing district in the state this year. But a budget battle in the legislature left the program with $225 million for 2001, instead of the planned $500 million. So 240 districts continue to await funding.

In Tennessee, a gubernatorial proposal to set up a state-financed prekindergarten program for all 4-year-olds within five years also fell victim to debates about how to pay for it.

"Money," Denton sums up. "I think that's seriously the main issue."

Georgia's program is paid for through a state lottery system and probably would not exist without it. But that may not be an option in other states.

To make high-quality early education available to all children from birth to age 5 whose parents want it would likely require a sliding-fee scale, argues Sharon Lynn Kagan, a professor of early-childhood and family policy at Teachers College, Columbia University. All but low-income families would bear at least some of the cost, based on their ability to pay.

"That's what Georgia does not do," Kagan says. "We don't have a good model for doing that yet."

"To me, a universal service is something that's available to everybody," says Joan Lombardi, the director of the Alexandria, Va.-based Children's Project, which seeks to increase public and private spending on children's services. "I think in early childhood, it would be nice if the goal was that it was free for everybody. Getting there is going to be a different story." ■

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Ohio Builds on Head Start Model

BY JESSICA L. SANDHAM

More than a decade has passed since Ohio bolstered its involvement in Head Start by adding $4 million in state money to the federal dollars spent on the comprehensive preschool program for poor children.

Since that time, Buckeye State officials have fostered an enviable state-federal Head Start partnership that reaches 57,000 children, a number that encompasses nearly all eligible 3- and 4-year-olds in the state, advocates for early-childhood education say.

A total of 21 states and the District of Columbia put money directly into the Head Start program in 2000, but none more so than Ohio, which pumped some $100 million into the program last year alone.

'Maximizing the Use of Dollars'

For the past several years, Ohio has stretched its state and federal Head Start dollars through a program that encourages collaboration between child-care centers and Head Start providers.

Under those partnerships, centers receiving federal funding that helps cover full-day child-care expenses for poor families—those earning within 185 percent of the federal poverty level—can also receive Head Start aid for children whose families are at or below 100 percent of the poverty level.

Currently, about 25 percent of Ohio's Head Start pupils are served through such collaborative efforts.

The child-care centers can then use the Head Start resources to provide higher salaries and more training for staff members—both critical aspects of high-quality child-care programs.

The centers, in turn, have to meet Head Start requirements for providing such services as health screenings and ensuring that parents are involved in the program.

As a result, advocates say, many children who would otherwise be ineligible for Head Start benefit because the program's comprehensive services are folded into existing child-care centers.

In addition, by effectively making Head Start a full-day program for some students, Ohio is better equipped to serve the needs of working families still struggling to make ends meet.

That's a crucial helping hand, given the limits on public assistance under the 1996 federal welfare law, says Mary Lou Rush, the interim director of early-childhood education for the state education department.

"It's a way of shoring up the quality of child care while maximizing the use of dollars," Rush says. "We're trying to define Head Start more as a service than a place." ■

R.I. Adds to Existing Child-Care Subsidies

BY JOY ARCHER

When Rhode Island set out to improve the way it supports its neediest children, state policymakers decided not to reinvent the wheel.

Rather than construct an entirely new system for preschool-age youngsters, they began by beefing up and adding to the state's well-established program of child-care subsidies, which gives families vouchers to use in paying for the services that best fit their needs.

The expansion started in 1996, when the legislature first made the assistance an entitlement for any family earning less than 185 percent of the federal poverty level. The move was seen as essential for the success of concurrent efforts by the state to help move people off welfare and into work.

"If you're eligible, we'll serve you," says Reeva Murphy, an official in the state human services department. "We couldn't even legally have a waiting list."

Boosting Access and Quality

Gov. Lincoln C. Almond, a Republican, upped the ante significantly in 1998 with a multifaceted initiative called Starting RIght.

The measure set in motion plans to raise income eligibility for the subsidy to 250 percent of the poverty level over the next few years. It also hiked the reimbursement rates for providers that serve parents who use the aid. And it offered state-supported medical coverage to those who provide center- and family-based child care.

The idea behind the initiative was to boost both access and quality.

Since the launch of Starting RIght, the number of children whose parents use the subsidies annually has nearly doubled, to more than 12,000.

Meanwhile, directing additional state support to those who provide child-care services has helped to bolster a workforce traditionally plagued by low wages and high turnover.

"We weren't just satisfied with having a safe place for kids to be, but we also wanted high-quality services for them," says Elizabeth Burke Bryant, the executive director of Rhode Island Kids Count, an advocacy group. "And we also recognized that high quality means, above all else, that we are able to pay wages that begin to take care of the people taking care of our children."

At the same time, Starting RIght also laid the groundwork for expanding the number of providers in the state offering comprehensive services in early-childhood education.

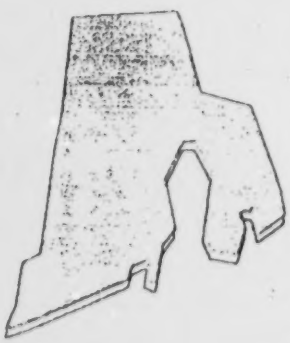
Grants for Networks

Under a new grant project, which is part of Starting RIght, Rhode Island is awarding money to networks of providers in local communities.

They are expected to offer programs similar to the federally financed Head Start program, through which participating children receive a wide range of health, nutrition, education, and other school-readiness services.

Last year, the first four networks to receive grants began serving about 200 children. Eligibility is limited to families with incomes below 108 percent of the poverty level.

"There's tremendous innovation to be looked at in Rhode Island," says Helen Blank, the director of early-childhood education at the Washington-based Children's Defense Fund. "They understood that you have to address many parts of the system to make this work, both with parents and with caregivers." ■



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tiatives to assist in early care and education," Sparks says, "and somewhere between 38 percent and 42 percent oppose it, strictly based on the value judgment that a parent ought to stay home and tend to their children."

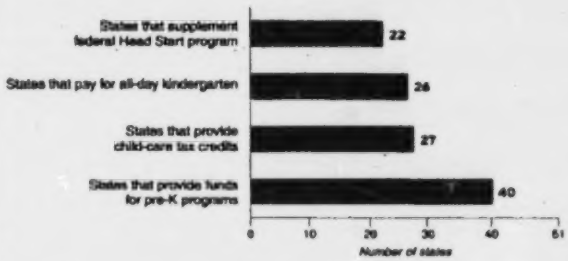
In North Dakota, for example, state Sen. Dwight C. Cook, a Republican who serves as the vice chairman of the Senate education committee, says: "There is a large element among North Dakota residents that is always very concerned about parental control, and people are very leery of efforts to legislate anything in early childhood. They don't want to expand early-childhood [laws] to the point where parents' controls are reduced."

In contrast, in most other industrialized nations, ensuring the safety and care of young children is viewed as a shared responsibility between parents and the public. A recent study of 12 countries belonging to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development found that almost all of them provide more extended family leave for the parents of young children, more generous child-care allowances, and greater support for high-quality early-childhood programs than does the United States.

"The dilemma here is that there's no plan," says Teachers College's Kagan. "Our nonsystem is helter-skelter. It's just a hodgepodge." As a result, she and others suggest, while the nation's spending on early-childhood education has gone up, the quality may actually be going down.

[redacted]

All states provide at least some funding for kindergarten. Twenty-five states pay for all-day kindergarten for districts that choose or are mandated to provide it, as does the District of Columbia. While the level of effort varies across states, from a high of $295 million in fiscal 2002 expenditures in California to $1.5 million in Nebraska, 39 states and the District of Columbia finance some sort of prekindergarten initiative. And 21 states and the District of Columbia have added money to their federal Head Start allocations to expand access to the program for poor children. In addition, 26 states and the District of Columbia provide child-care tax credits to help families cover the costs of care outside the home.



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SOURCE: National Center for Children in Poverty, 2002; Education Week, 2001; National Women's Law Center, 2001

Licensing: Basic Protections, But No More

As the 4- and 5-year-olds wake up from their naps in the Rainbow Room at the Park Street Children's Center, they notice that teacher Janice Burch has placed some flashlights and plastic, colored lenses on a table. A few children try putting one of the lenses on top of a flashlight bulb, as they shine it toward the ceiling. "What if you put purple and then orange?" asks Emily, a dark-haired 5-year-old, placing one lens on top of the other. "Oh my gosh! Look! It turned pink!"

Burch reaches into the supply cabinet as more children awake. "Oh," she says. "I found three flashlights and one more. How many does that make?" Kai, a high-spirited little boy in a striped T-shirt, points his flashlight toward the ceiling and announces, "I'm pretending it's a spooky house, and it's spooky in here." Unprompted, he begins to tell a story about a spooky house.

"Hey," says Burch, "can I write your story down? Let's get a piece of paper. Tell me your story." As Kai narrates, and Burch begins to write, other children gather around the writing table to watch and listen. When Kai is finished, Burch asks if she can put the story in his "special book," a three-ring binder she keeps for every child to collect samples of his or her work.

"First, can you read it to us?" Emily asks. The teacher reads the story back, as Kai chimes in with more details.

Traditionally, "quality" in early-childhood education has meant ensuring that children are cared for in a safe and nurturing environment. State licensing standards commonly address group size, the number of children per caregiver, and such physical features as the height of playground equipment.

"Licensure, by definition in this country, is designed to provide very basic, minimal levels of quality," says Richard M. Clifford, a co-director of the National Center for Early Development and Learning at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. "If you go into a restaurant and it's licensed, that doesn't mean the food is good. It means it's not going to make you sick. That's how I see licensing in child care—it provides a floor of very basic protections for children."

Such licensing standards rarely, if ever, address the learning components of early-care and -education settings. "State licensing standards, for the most part, are deficient in ensuring children get a strong early-learning experience," says Helen Blank, the director of child care for the Children's Defense Fund, a national advocacy group based in Washington.

Even those minimal protections often fail to safeguard children adequately. Only seven states—Connecticut, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, North Dakota, Oregon, and Vermont—and the District of Columbia, for example, adhere to the recommendations set by the National Association for the Education of Young Children for teacher-to-child ratios and group sizes for both 4-year-olds and 18-month-olds.

In many states, certain settings are exempt from licensure entirely: family child-care homes that serve a small number of children, preschools that operate only a few hours a day, or sites run by religious organizations. Nationwide, roughly 40 percent of all early-care and early-education programs are exempt from state regulations, according to the Education Commission of the States. Moreover, many states fail to enforce their licensing requirements adequately.

"What we set out to design was a curriculum that, without question, was language-development-oriented." ERIC J. SMITH, Superintendent, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, N.C., Schools

Early-Learning Standards

It's time for literacy circle in Cathy Presson's room at the Double Oaks Pre-Kindergarten and

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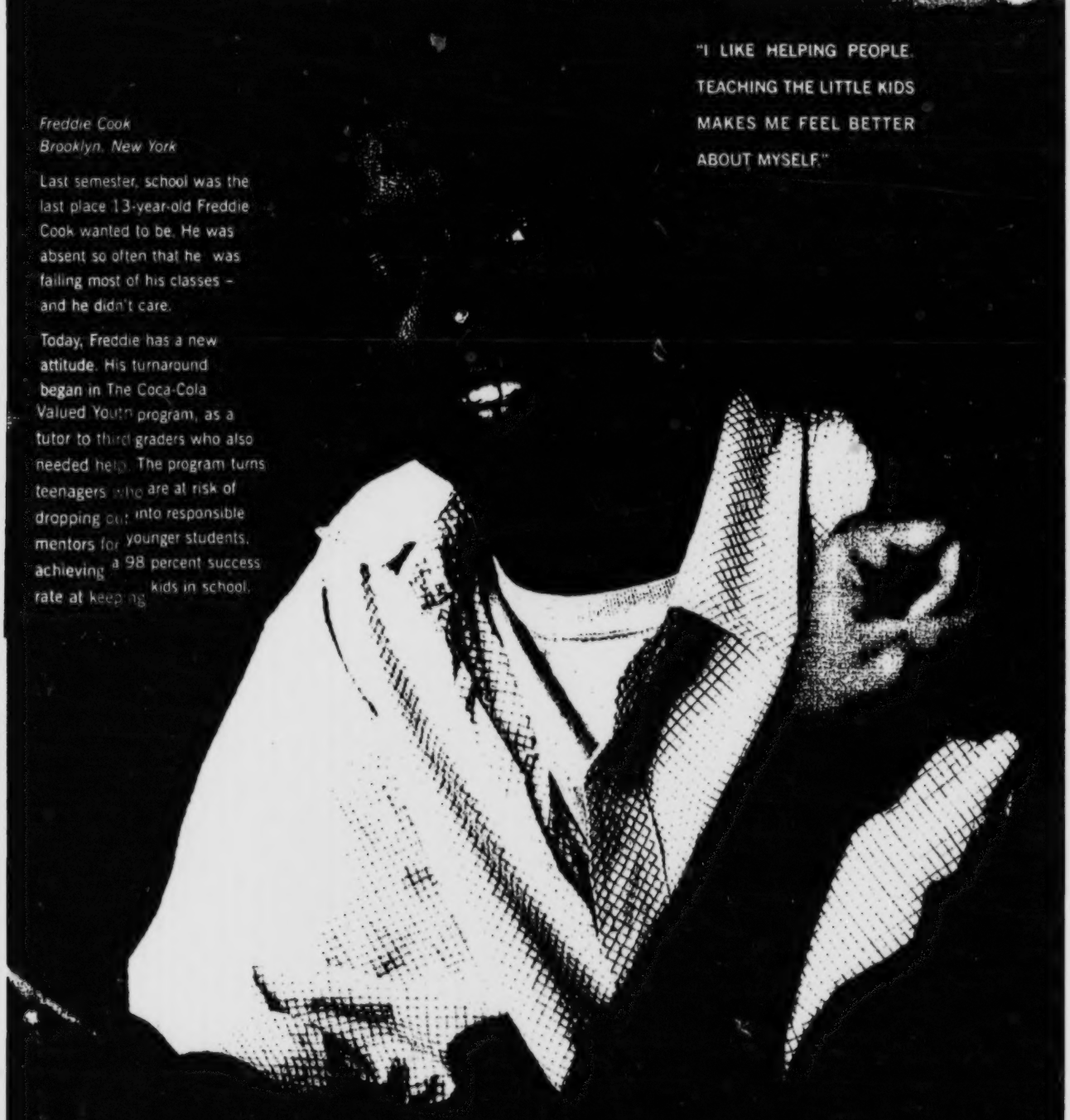

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Freddie Cook
Brooklyn, New York

Last semester, school was the last place 13-year-old Freddie Cook wanted to be. He was absent so often that he was failing most of his classes – and he didn't care.

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Sweden Combines Learning and Care

BY MARY-ELLEN PHELPS DEILY

Mira Banjac loves her job. Banjac is one of the 31,000 university-educated preschool teachers working in Sweden's far-reaching system of early-childhood education and care.

Forty children ages 18 months to 5½ years attend the Forskolan Sälen in downtown Stockholm where Banjac works. The children are divided into two groups of 20, with three teachers per group. Banjac spends her days working with her young charges on everything from social skills to the alphabet. But the emphasis, she takes care to note, is always on having fun.

"The basic method for teaching is teaching through play," she says. "We work together like a team, and I am more like a guide."

Today in Sweden, the concept of combining learning and care for even young children is a given. With generous leave benefits for new parents and a nationwide system of government-supported child-care centers, Sweden is widely praised for its attention to the needs of its youngest citizens.

An "ethos [exists] that caring for young children is the right thing to do" in Sweden, says Sharon Lynn Kagan, a professor of early-childhood and family policy at Teachers College, Columbia University. Kagan headed a research team convened by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development to study Swedish preschools in 1999. Her findings were overwhelmingly positive.

Observers say the Swedes have built a comprehensive-care strategy because the concept of early-childhood education is not new to them. Swedish policymakers hammered out the framework for the nation's child-care system three decades ago, when economic and social changes sent more Swedish women than ever into the workplace.

And while the system has undergone changes over the years, the commitment to government-supported, education-oriented care for children from age 1 onward has remained a constant.

"Swedish parents should not have to choose between children and work," Barbara Martin Korpi, a senior adviser in Sweden's Ministry of Education and Science, says.

A Year's Paid Leave

In land mass, Sweden is comparable to the state of California, while its population—about 8.8 million people—is about the size of New Jersey's. Well-known for its generous—or, some would argue, overwhelming—array of government benefits, the Scandinavian country makes no exception when it comes to caring for young children.

Under Swedish law, a parent—either a child's mother or father—is entitled to up to 480 days of job-protected leave after the birth of a child. Such parents are paid 80 percent of their regular wages for the first 360 days they are home, and a lower, flat-rate benefit for the following 90 days. They receive no pay for the final 30 days. In addition, the parent who does not stay home is granted one month of leave, which he or she must use or lose.

After the first year, most parents head back to work, but the government continues to ease their transition. The central government sends money to municipalities which, in turn, must provide care for children age 1 or older whose parents work or are students. The system also makes it a priority to serve children deemed to be in particular need, such as the offspring of immigrants or low-income parents, and youngsters with disabilities. The municipality must provide care within three months of a parent's request.

"Sweden offers the most comprehensive and universally high-quality approach to serving young children and families, birth through the start of formal school, of any country I'm aware of," says Kagan.

According to the Ministry of Education and Science, parents pay about 17 percent of the cost of their children's care, while the central and local governments pick up the rest of the tab. The ministry reports that, in 2000, 69.1 percent of Swedish children ages 1 through 5—or about 315,000 children—attended government-supported child-care centers. By comparison, about 11 percent were home with parents on leave, 10 percent were cared for by professional "child minders," and 1 percent were cared for by a full-time stay-at-home mother. The remaining children fell into a range of care categories, including care by an unemployed parent, parents working in shifts, or private care by a relative or nanny.

Taxpayers, of course, must foot some hefty bills for all those benefits. A full-time working Swede pays on average 30 percent to 40 percent in income taxes, while in 1998—the most recent year for which comparisons were available—Americans paid an average of 14.4 percent in federal income taxes.

In 1996, Sweden made its priorities clear when it transferred responsibility for child-care programs from the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs to the Ministry of Education and Science. Toward that end, the Swedish government recently ordered that preschool teachers study education for 3½ years at the university level, up from a mandate of three years' study.

Swedish preschools also work from a national curriculum for children ages 1 through 5—a concept that would undoubtedly prove controversial in the United States. Swedish officials say, however, that their curriculum is broad and open to interpretation by local officials.

"It is not a detailed cookbook," says Martin Korpi of the Education Ministry. "It is very much a goal-oriented document."

And, she adds, while preschools place a strong emphasis on learning, the object is not to do so in a heavy-handed way. "Children should be allowed to be children. Children should mainly play," Martin Korpi says.

Over time, the Swedes have refined their programs. The nation also began implementing a voluntary maximum fee for the care of young children on Jan. 1. The change was made because of concerns that there was too much variance in what different municipalities charged parents, says Håkan Carlsson, a political adviser in the central government. Labor union officials speak out because they want policies that make it easiest for their members to work, he says. Parents also play a significant role in the policy debate. "They are powerful," Carlsson says. ■

Family Resource Center in Charlotte, N.C., one of three fully dedicated prekindergarten centers the school system runs.

"We're going to learn a new rhyme today," Presson tells the 4-year-olds gathered on the floor around her. "Look at this picture," she says, pointing to a large drawing of "Little Miss Muffet" on an easel nearby. "Tell me what you see." After the children discuss the picture, Presson reads the rhyme aloud, pointing to each word as she recites.

"Have you ever eaten curds and whey?" she asks the children. "I wonder what that is?" Reaching behind her, she pulls out a bowl of cottage cheese and tells the children they can taste some after circle time. Next, she reads the rhyme again as the class recites along with her. "Let's see if there are any rhyming words," she says. "Oh, listen, 'Muffet, tuffet.' Do they sound the same at the end?" The children recite the poem once more, clapping when they encounter words that rhyme.

"So these are our rhyming words," says Presson. "They sound the same at the end."

Now in its fifth year, the Bright Beginnings Pre-Kindergarten Program in the 105,000-student Charlotte-Mecklenburg, N.C., school district serves some 3,000 educationally needy children in public schools, child-care centers, and Head Start programs throughout the area. Its goal is to provide children with a language- and literacy-rich curriculum so they will start kindergarten ready to be successful.

All participating families receive a home visit before the school year begins. In addition, a social worker, a child-development specialist, a parent advocate, and a family educator are assigned to each site to work with teachers, children, and families.

The program's 750-page curriculum is organized around children's books. Youngsters divide their time among four literacy circles and longer blocks of center time, during which they can work individually or in small groups on activities that interest them. Through a mixture of direct instruction and child-centered play, the program stresses the development of such pre-reading skills as oral language, positive attitudes toward print, letter identification, and the relationship between letters and their sounds.

"We were very clear," says Superintendent Eric J. Smith. "What we set out to design was a curriculum that, without question, was language-development-oriented, and we wanted to do that in a way that was developmentally appropriate. Everything else was secondary."

Evaluations show that educationally needy 4-year-olds who participate in the program enter kindergarten on a par with their less academically needy peers, and that they continue to outperform similar children who did not participate in the program through the end of 2nd grade—the most recent data available.

Few districts or states have launched early-childhood initiatives as ambitious as Bright Beginnings. But research about the importance of early learning for children's cognitive and social growth has led some states to describe the quality of instruction that should occur in preschool settings, at least for programs the state subsidizes.

Almost all states have standards for students in elementary school. Only 19 states and the District of Columbia lay out specific expectations for kindergartners. Fifteen states and the District have specific standards for prekindergarten. Five more states are working on such standards. Only six states—California, Connecticut, Georgia, Maryland, Michigan, and Washington—require preschool programs to adhere to the standards. Georgia, for instance, devised a set of educational standards that prekinder-

garten classrooms must meet, including a list of approved curricula.

In addition, seven states require their state-subsidized prekindergarten programs follow federal Head Start standards. Head Start requires local grantees to meet an extensive set of performance requirements aimed at fostering children's overall development and school readiness.

Educators are quick to warn, however, that appropriate instruction for infants to 5-year-olds does not resemble that for older children.

"Acknowledging the value of preacademic content in preschools does not mean that 4-year-olds should be taught using the same methods and materials as employed for 7-year-olds," cautions Grover J. "Russ" Whitehurst, the assistant secretary for educational research and improvement in the U.S. Department of Education. "A pushdown to pre-K of the pedagogy and materials used in elementary school will likely fail and could actually harm young children."

While no single curriculum or pedagogical approach can be identified as best for young children, concluded the National Research Council in its 443-page book *Eager to Learn: Educating Our Preschoolers*, children tend to learn more and be better prepared for formal schooling when they attend well-planned, high-quality preschools in which curricular aims are specified and delivered.

The report recommended that all states draft content standards for the early years that address areas often omitted from early-childhood programs, including phonological awareness (understanding the sounds that make up words), number concepts, methods of scientific investigation, and cultural knowledge and language.

States also are mounting efforts to improve the quality of early-childhood programs, often using a combination of federal and state money. At least 4 percent of a state's allocation under the CCDF block grant and 25 percent of all new Head Start dollars must be spent on initiatives to enhance quality.

Seven states require their state-financed prekindergarten programs to earn accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children. To earn the voluntary national stamp of approval, programs must meet criteria in such areas as staff qualifications, curriculum, and teacher-child ratios.

In addition, 26 states and the District of Columbia offer "tiered" or "differential" reimbursement rates for child-care subsidies. Under such policies, providers that earn national accreditation or meet criteria specified by the state can receive more money than normal for the children whose enrollment is subsidized.

Experts point out that such initiatives typically are limited and fall short of broader-scale efforts to move the whole system to higher quality.

If a child-care center serves 100 children and only 15 receive subsidies, says Adams of the Urban Institute, even if those subsidies are raised 10 percent, "that's not going to allow you to pay your teachers a higher salary on an ongoing basis. It's not going to allow you to make the ongoing, long-term investments that you need to make to sustain high-quality care."

"I think the biggest quality issue facing child care is the lack of ability to recruit and retain qualified staff." JOAN LOMBARDI, Director, The Children's Project

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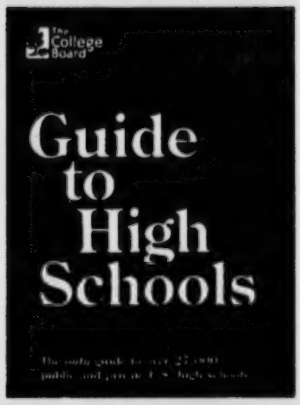

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Others worry that, in a market-based system, increasing regulations could raise the price of care for needy families and make it more likely that they would turn to totally unregulated settings. That's one reason many early-childhood advocates stress that states should close the existing exemptions in their licensing systems as they put in place efforts to address quality.

Teaching: The Crucial Relationship

Harvey Bagshaw, a prekindergarten teacher at Merry Oaks Elementary School in Charlotte, N.C., is reading to his class from the rhythmic, rhyming children's book Chicka Chicka Boom Boom, *in which all 26 letters of the alphabet race one another up a coconut tree, only to end up in a heap at the bottom when the tree bends from the excess weight. The children, who have heard the book before, recite the refrain along with Bagshaw to much giggling.*

Suddenly, Matthew, a wiry little boy who can barely contain his excitement, shouts out, "This don't match with this." When Bagshaw asks what he means, Matthew comes up and points to two of the letters. "This is a little letter n," explains Bagshaw, "but this is a capital N. They're both N's." Matthew studies the illustration for a moment, then points to the two Z's in the picture. "It's a baby," he says of the lowercase letter.

As Bagshaw finishes reading the book, a chime rings. "Oh," he says. "It's the mystery box."

Reaching behind him, he pulls out a square gift box and shakes it. "Something is inside," he says, a look of surprise on his face. "Yeah!" the kids shout, as they proceed to guess what's inside the package by the sound. After a few minutes, Bagshaw reaches in and pulls out a small crate containing plastic, magnetic letters. "Letters!" the children shout.

Bagshaw then reaches behind him and pulls out a magnetic board with the image of a coconut tree on it. "Look," he says, "you can do the letters up the coconut tree today during center time."

"Maybe the really best thing we can do is to have children in better shape before they start kindergarten."

WALTER S. GILLIAM, Associate Research Scientist, Yale University Child Study Center

Unlike many early-childhood educators, Bagshaw has a bachelor's degree in early-childhood education and a state teaching license in birth-K education, both of which are required for all Bright Beginnings teachers. He's also paid on a par with K-12 educators. Before becoming a prekindergarten teacher, he spent six years teaching kindergarten, and one year teaching 1st grade.

"The biggest difference I find is you have to be more developmental" with younger children, he says.

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"There's so much play involved. It's got to be exciting for them. It's got to hold their interest."

Research has found that one of the strongest predictors of high-quality early-learning programs is the preparation and compensation of early-childhood educators and their responsiveness and sensitivity to the children in their care. The National Research Council has recommended that all young children in center-based programs be taught by a teacher with a bachelor's degree and specialized training in early childhood.

Yet nowhere is the gap between early-childhood research and reality greater than in the preparation and pay of those who work with young children.

As a nation, the United States pays about as much to parking-lot attendants and dry-cleaning workers as it does to early-childhood educators. The average annual salary of child-care workers in 2000 was $15,430. Preschool teachers, who typically work with 3- to 5-year-olds, don't fare much better, with annual salaries of $19,610—less than half what the average elementary school teacher earns.

Not surprisingly, given those numbers, turnover among early-childhood workers is high, and education requirements are minimal.

Janice Burch, an early-childhood educator at the Park Street Children's Center, was thrilled when her daughter decided to follow in her footsteps.

But despite having completed a double major in English and education in college, her daughter earned only $6.50 an hour as the director of a child-care center in Pittsburgh. After returning to classroom teaching in a child-care center following a maternity leave, her pay dropped to $5.50 an hour. Today, Burch's daughter is home, caring for her own children.

"I think the biggest quality issue facing child care is the lack of ability to recruit and retain qualified staff, primarily because the whole child-care system is so resource-poor," says Joan Lombardi, the director of the Alexandria, Va.-based Children's Project, which promotes greater spending on children's services. "It's an enormous problem that I don't think we've even begun to address."

In many states, individuals who work with young children are not required to hold any certificate or degree, and ongoing training requirements are minimal.

Every state, for example, requires kindergarten teachers to have at least a bachelor's degree and a certificate in elementary or early-childhood education. But only 20 states and the District of Columbia require teachers in state-financed prekindergartens or preschool programs to meet similar requirements.

With the exception of Rhode Island, no state requires teachers in child-care centers to hold at least a bachelor's degree and have training in early learning. In fact, 30 states don't insist that teachers in child-care centers have any training before they begin work, according to the Institute for Leadership and Career Initiatives at Wheelock College in Boston.

Recently, though, states and the federal government have begun to get more serious about the preparation of those who work with young children. In 1998, for example, Congress significantly strengthened the education requirements for Head Start teachers. By 2003, 50 percent of Head Start teachers in each center must have an associate's degree in early childhood.

A growing number of states also have initiatives either to help providers acquire more education or to supplement their wages. The best-known program, which began in North Carolina in 1990, is the TEACH Early Childhood Project.

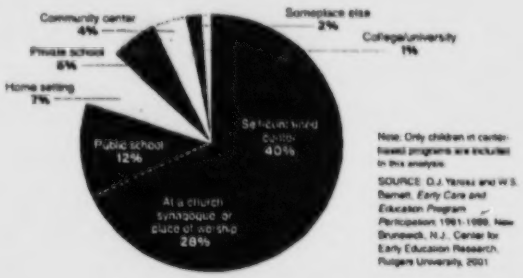
Under TEACH, which stands for Teacher Education And Compensation Helps, child-care providers receive scholarships to attend school and bonuses or raises from their employers when they complete their programs of study. The recipients, in turn, commit to working in their sponsoring child-care centers for at least another year.

Since North Carolina launched the program, turnover in the state has dropped from 42 percent annually in 1994 to 31 percent in 1999. An additional 17 states have since replicated the effort.

Other models to improve wages and retain people in the field have also emerged throughout the country.

A Variety of Settings for Early-Childhood Care and Education

A large proportion of children from birth to age 5 in center-based early-childhood programs attend for-profit or nonprofit programs in self-contained settings. Almost as many, 34 percent, are cared for in private schools, churches, synagogues, or other places of worship. Only twelve percent receive care and education in a public school setting.



Note: Only children in center-based programs are included in this analysis.

SOURCE: D.J. Hernandez and W.S. Barnett, *Early Care and Education Programs and Participation, 1991-1999*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Center for Early Education Research, Rutgers University, 2001

Children Attend Variety of Settings

BY KATHRYN M. DOHERTY

Although Americans continue to debate whether very young children should receive care and education outside the home, the reality is that most already are being cared for by people other than their parents for at least part of the day.

About six in 10 children under age 5 in the United States, or 11.9 million youngsters, now spend time in nonparental care, in large part because their parents work.

According to the latest estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, 60 percent of the nation's children age 5 or younger now live in two-parent homes where both parents work or in single-parent households where that parent is employed.

Of mothers with infants, the percentage that worked outside the home rose from 31 percent in 1976 to a high of 59 percent in 1998; it slipped to 55 percent in 2000. Among mothers with children at least a year old, nearly three-fourths were in the labor force in 2000.

Patterns of preschool and child care over the past decade reflect parents' increasing employment. The National Household Education Survey, or NHES, tracks family use of child-care arrangements. It shows that most infants, toddlers, and preschool-age children receive care outside the home before they enter school. Among 4-year-olds, almost 70 percent participated in a center-based early-childhood program in 1999, the NHES found.

From the time of their first birthdays, a majority of children now receive care outside the home.

So where are children spending their days before they enter formal K-12 schooling?

Among children from birth to age 5 who have not yet entered school, 38 percent are cared for solely by their parents. But the figures differ dramatically by age, and trends over time show increasing reliance on care outside the home.

Thirty-one percent of 3-year-olds and just 18 percent of 4-year-olds are cared for exclusively by their parents, according to the 1999 survey. Just 23 percent of 3- to 5-year-olds are cared for only at home, compared with about a third of that age group a decade ago. The survey also found that children are receiving early care and education in a variety of settings.

Among children involved in center-based programs, the largest proportion of newborns to 5-year-olds (40 percent) attend a for-profit or nonprofit self-contained child-care center. Twenty-eight percent are cared for in a church or other religiously affiliated setting. Only 12 percent of young children attend programs located in public schools.

Twenty-two percent of 3- to 5-year-olds are cared for in at least two settings outside their own homes in any given week.

The type of center-based care families use varies by income. Low-income families appear to be much more dependent on home care and publicly financed settings—such as Head Start and school-based preschool programs—than better-off families. In part, that's because government programs typically target children who are poor or otherwise deemed at risk.

Higher-income families, who are more inclined to use center-based care, are much more likely to send their children to arrangements in nonpublic schools, which on average, cost about $5,000 a year for newborns to 5-year-olds in 1999, putting them well out of the reach of poor families.

The NHES survey reveals nothing about the quality of child care. Nor do such surveys disclose whether the programs that children attend have a strong educational element. But the sheer numbers of young children now in nonparental care make it critical for educators and policymakers to pay more attention to those early-learning issues. ■

Under North Carolina's WAGE$ program, child-care teachers and directors can earn stipends as their levels of training increase and they stay on the job. The state also helps pay for health insurance for child-care workers. Nine states have established such compensation packages.

But while such programs offer a good start, says Gilliam of Yale University, they still don't ensure that early-childhood educators are paid commensurately with their education and credentials. "I think it's an economics issue," Gilliam says. "If you're going to require people to be credentialed, you're going to have to pay them salaries to go along with that."

Assessing Results

States' growing investments in the early years, and their growing concerns about school readiness, also are leading them to revisit the question of how to measure the success or failure of their early-childhood initiatives.

Today, 17 states mandate readiness testing of kindergartners as a first step in identifying children with special needs or to help plan instruction. Six states use kindergarten testing to monitor statewide trends in how prepared children are for formal schooling. Fifteen states and the District of Columbia require diagnostic or developmental testing of prekindergartners.

At the federal level, new performance measures are being used to evaluate the Head Start program, including its impact on children's math and literacy skills.

While some believe that greater accountability in early-childhood education is inevitable, many worry about the pushing downward of a K-12 curriculum and the inappropriate use of such measures—which may include portfolios of children's work, observational checklists, individually administered performance tasks, and parent and teacher surveys.

In 1998, the National Education Goals Panel cautioned that while assessments are needed to monitor trends in early-childhood education and evaluate programs, such measures should never be used to make high-stakes decisions about individual youngsters, whose development is both rapid and sporadic.

The goals panel also warned that readiness for school requires far more than a set of preacademic skills. It also encompasses children's cognitive, physical, motor, social, emotional, and language development, as well as their general approach toward learning.

A Blueprint for Change

In the long run, experts say, early care and education will improve only if states build the infrastructure to support high-quality programs. That means rigorous standards and regulations for early-childhood providers of all types; an adequate system for training, credentialing, and paying early-childhood teachers; better methods for tracking progress and measuring results; and a streamlined governance structure.

Achieving those objectives requires a stable and significant source of money, advocates for early-childhood programs say.

"Any really high-quality program, regardless of where it's provided, is going to be expensive," argues Clifford of the University of North Carolina. "We need to accept the fact that it's expensive to provide these services, and not think that we can provide services for 4-year-olds for less money than we do for 5-year-olds, because we can't. It's actually going to cost a little more for 4-year-olds."

Several efforts are under way to rethink how the United States pays for early care and education, and many states are seeking new sources of money to support their efforts.

In 1998, California voters approved a 50-cent tax on cigarettes and other tobacco products to help support early-childhood initiatives. Arkansas recently enacted a new surcharge on beer that is earmarked for child care. And Georgia's prekindergarten program is financed through state lottery proceeds.

In New Jersey and North Carolina, state courts have ordered more spending on early-childhood services for disadvantaged youngsters as part of settlements in school finance cases.

"I think that every state in this country should develop a vision for what it wants for an early-care and -education system—a blueprint. And there should be incremental funding going into the system's different parts every year," Kagan of Teachers College says. "If you took roads as an example, there was a plan for how we would build an interstate highway system in this nation, and little by little, we built toward that plan."

As a first step, suggests Lombardi of the Children's Project, every state should do an early-childhood review. "They should stop and figure out what they have going on already, and where the gaps are, and how the pieces fit together," she advises, "because right now we have growth, but not planfulness."

Some fear, however, that the budget crunch in many states could pit services for the youngest children against funding for K-12 education. In Michigan, which faces a possible shortfall of up to $350 million in the state school aid budget for fiscal year 2002, Lindy Buch, the supervisor of early childhood and parenting for the state education department, says it's unclear whether some of the districts that are expanding their preschool programs will continue to do so.

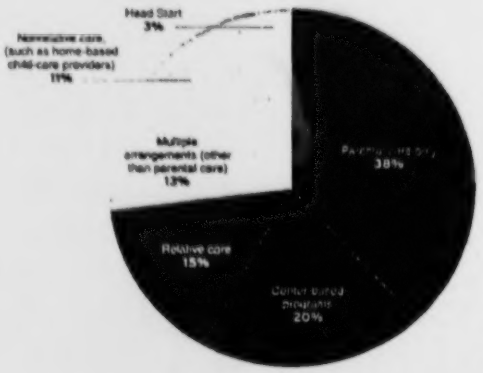
"Some of these districts are squeezed, and they've had to make some choices between whether you provide Advanced Placement classes for a small number of high school students or you reduce class sizes in elementary school," she says. "Whether they'll continue with new preschool programs, I don't know."

Some polls from other states show that voters do not support financial increases for early-childhood care and education if they perceive that it will shift money away from the public schools.

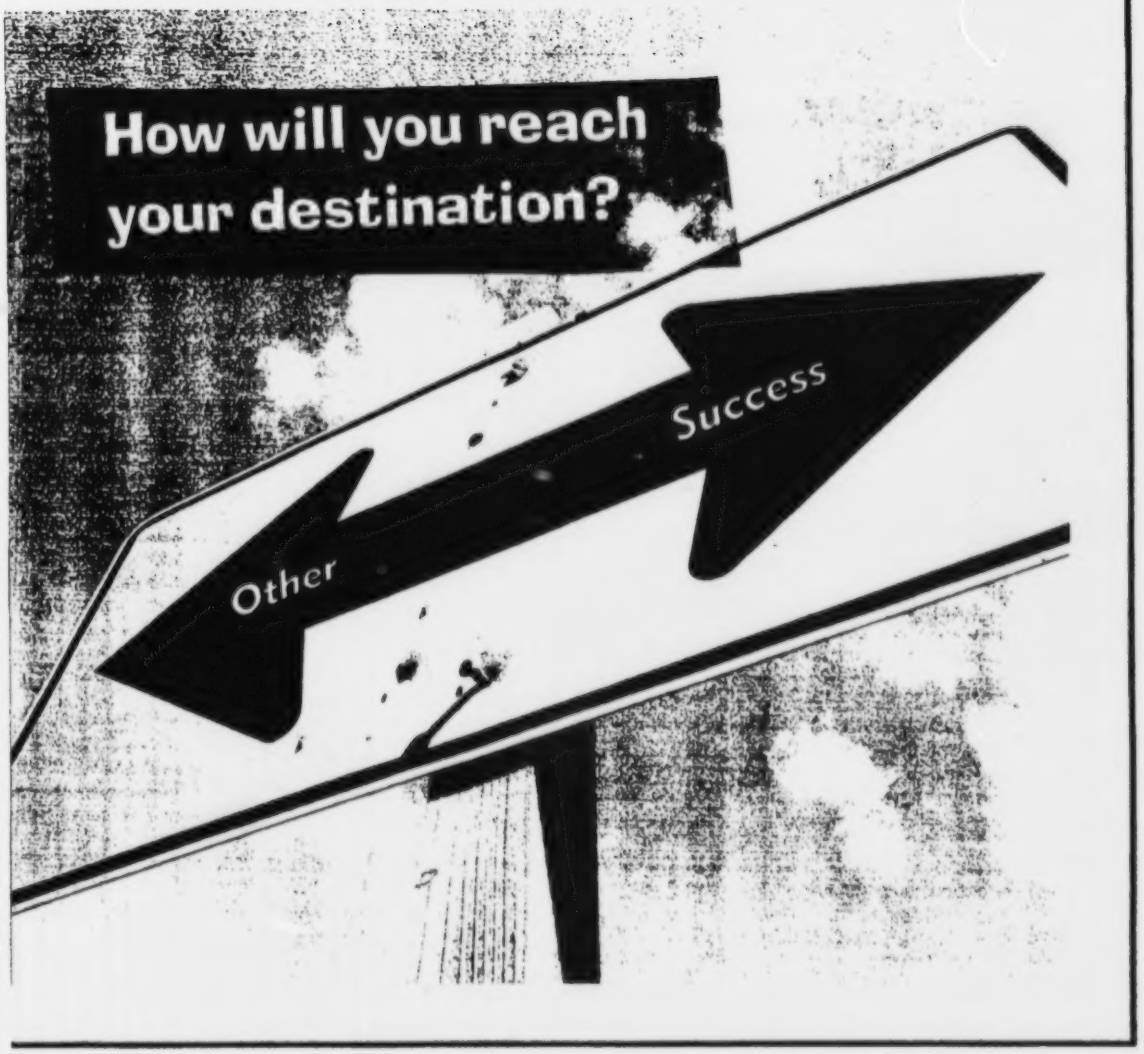
Despite the worsening economic picture late last year, many believe that the continued press for better academic achievement in the elementary years provides an unprecedented opportunity for early care and education. "We've been so concerned about ensuring that our K-12 system gets better," Gilliam of Yale University says. "Maybe the really best thing we can do is to have children in better shape before they start kindergarten." ■

Where Are Children From Birth to 5 Cared For?

Over the past decade, the proportion of preschool-age children being cared for and educated outside the home by adults other than their parents has increased substantially. As of 1999, only 38 percent of children from birth to age 5, and less than a quarter of 3- to 5-year-olds, received care only from their parents. Thirteen percent of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers received care from at least two sources besides their parents.



SOURCE: D.J. Yarosz and W.S. Barnett, *Early Care and Education Program Participation 1991-1999*, New Brunswick, N.J.: Center for Early Education Research, Rutgers University, 2001



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Defining Quality

States are adding program standards that go beyond health and safety to focus on academic knowledge.

BY LINDA JACOBSON

Education programs for young children have always had standards—standards about the number of children who can be in the care of each adult, standards about locks on doors, gates on stairways, and fences around pools.

Most standards for early-childhood programs have focused on health and safety precautions rather than academic knowledge and skills.

But with states spending more on preschool, and policymakers becoming more convinced that children's early educational experiences will improve later school performance, efforts have increased to describe more explicitly what such programs should include and the progress that children should make before they enter kindergarten.

California, for example, is in the process of phasing in its Desired Results for Children and Families, which consist of four broad goals for children from birth through age 14 and two goals for parents. Within the desired results are such expectations as "children are personally and socially competent." And under each such statement are more detailed indicators that will let teachers and providers know whether children are reaching those objectives for their ages.

Those standards will apply to children enrolled in child-care and child-development programs that are under contract with the California education department, including family child-care homes. If the programs don't meet the standards, they could eventually lose their contracts with the state. At present, far more independent providers operate in California than those with state contracts.

To accompany the desired results, the state released in 2000 the "Prekindergarten Learning and Development Guidelines" for 3- to 5-year-olds. That document describes more specifically the steps teachers should take to create appropriate classroom environments, to work with children who have varying abilities, and to foster the development of prereading skills.

Feedback from providers in the field shows that "they feel validated by what's in there, but they also feel challenged," says Sharon Hawley, an administrator in the state education department's child-development division, who also served as a consultant to the department when the guidelines were being written.

Preschoolers play dress-up in the courtyard at the Westwood Presbyterian Church Preschool in Los Angeles during "free flow" time—when children get to choose their activities and the spaces in which they play.

'A Common Language'

At Westwood Presbyterian Church Preschool, a Los Angeles facility accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, director Sylvia Henry says the new guidelines confirmed much of what the school already includes in its program.

But in response to the document, she also looked for ways to integrate more activities that would strengthen the children's phonemic awareness—the understanding that words are made up of small sounds.

"For us, it's asking, 'How do we continue to be developmental when we know that kids are going to face this in kindergarten?' " Henry says.

Because the Westwood preschool is a private program instead of state-financed, compliance with the state standards and guidelines is voluntary, as it would be for other private programs in other states.

Nevertheless, the California education department's child-development division plans to make the documents available to anyone caring for preschoolers. Outreach materials are even being drafted for family child-care providers and those who are exempt from the state licensing system, such as relatives.

California's guidelines are also helping to connect the early-childhood community to the world of K-12 education by showing how the skills children acquire during prekindergarten relate to what they will be expected to learn once they're in kindergarten, says Marcia Meyer, the coordinator of child-development programs for the Santa Cruz County Office of Education.

"It has provided us with a common language," Meyer says. "I think it has taken away from the child-development community the fear of push-down academics."

Across the country, meanwhile, the Massachusetts education department in 2001 introduced a similar set of draft standards and guidelines for 3- and 4-year-

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olds, linked to the state's curriculum for K-12 students.

The standards even include such academic areas as physics and statistics, but on a preschooler's level. Children, for example, should explore, observe, and describe the physical changes in liquids and solids. And they are expected to experiment with motion and balance by manipulating various objects on different surfaces.

"While the terminology in the guidelines may sound sophisticated for preschool children, we feel it is important for teachers to be able to articulate to parents and to the community the importance of early experiences to later academic achievement," says a draft of the new Massachusetts standards document.

In the Same Direction?

But even with such activity around standards for programs serving young children, little is known about what states as a whole are doing. That is why a number of researchers have recently gathered or are now collecting information on state standards for preschoolers.

For example, the Erikson Institute for the Advanced Study of Child Development, a graduate school in Chicago, recently collected prekindergarten standards and assessments from as many states as possible. Some states, Erikson researchers found, have more than one set of standards or expectations that apply to preschool-age children.

Another project is being carried out through a collaboration by Serve, a regional education research and training organization in Greensboro, N.C., the Council of Chief State School Officers, and the National Association for the Education of Young Children, both in Washington.

Beginning last fall, researchers began collecting standards documents—or whatever name the states use—and will analyze them for similarities and differences. The project will eventually produce a database of state learning standards for children from birth through age 5 and a report that provides conclusions and the implications of the trend across the country.

Catherine Scott-Little, a senior program specialist at Serve, says the intent of the project is not to set national standards, but instead to find out "whether we're all headed in the same direction."

Lastly, the National Center for Early Development and Learning, a federally financed research center based at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, conducted a 50-state survey of state-subsidized prekindergarten. Part of the effort was meant to gather information about standards for children in such programs. Richard M. Clifford, a co-director of the center, says many states have tried to adapt their K-3 standards for preschoolers. But, he adds, "people have made a real effort not to make them just academic."

A separate project of the national center—a six-state study of state-subsidized preschool programs—should provide some much-needed information on the level of quality those programs are providing.

While information has existed for some years on child care, and more recently on Head Start, little has been known about what state prekindergarten programs are doing. "There is no real study that looks systematically across the pre-K world," Clifford says.

In general, he says, child-care centers have had lower quality than Head Start and pre-K programs. A landmark, four-state project in 1995—known as the "Cost, Quality, and Outcomes" study, for which Clifford was one of the researchers—found that most care fell in the poor to mediocre range. Child-care-center classrooms for 3- and 4-year-olds, however, were of higher quality than those for infants and toddlers.

A team of researchers in 1999 released findings from the Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey that showed the federal preschool program, in general, was providing good-quality services and preparing children for kindergarten. Using the same rating scale that was used in the "Cost, Quality, and Outcomes" study, the researchers found that none of the programs they evaluated scored below "minimum quality." Past research in his own state of North Carolina, Clifford notes, has confirmed that pattern, with Head Start and preschool programs rating higher than child-care centers.

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Meanwhile, scientific research on how young children learn and on the benefits of using certain teaching strategies has advanced in recent years. That's given people in the field of early-childhood education greater guidance on what makes up a high-quality preschool program.

In 2000, the National Research Council, an arm of the National Academy of Sciences, released *Eager to Learn: Educating Our Preschoolers*. While the 443-page book does not advocate one particular curriculum over another, it reviews the research on various methods and points to the types of learning activities that both engage young children and prepare them for success in elementary school.

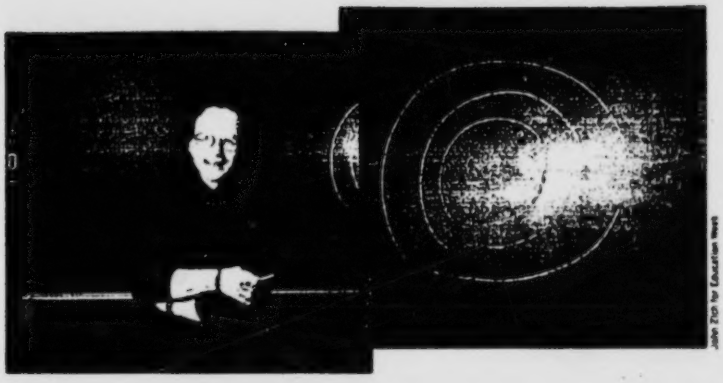
The authors stressed that while developing social skills should certainly be the goal of teachers working with youngsters, those skills can be built through activities that strengthen children's cognitive abilities and knowledge. Time for play is also important in the preschool classroom, because it can stretch children's imaginations and "provide them with the social and self-regulatory skills needed for learning complex information," according to the book.

At Westwood Presbyterian Church Preschool, a racially and ethnically diverse school not far from the University of California, Los Angeles, children are given "free flow" time during which they can roam among three different classrooms and the outside play yards. Instead of a specific snack time, fruit and crackers are arranged in baskets on a counter so children can grab something to eat when they're hungry.

That approach, says Henry, the center's director, helps children learn independence and keeps them from feeling "like they're being herded."

"They learn to make lots of choices," she says. "But if a child really wants to work on riding a two-wheeler bike, he can spend a lot of time doing it."

Creating an environment that encourages children's early-literacy skills is one of the most important responsibilities for a preschool teacher or a child-care provider, the NRC authors noted. Reading to children and allowing them to "read" back and verbally expand on the story are seen as two essential activities that should be a routine part of the day. Materials for "pretend writing" and opportunities to see and experiment with various uses of print—such as making a grocery list or a birthday card—should also be available, according to *Eager to Learn*.



John Fitch for Education Week

At the Westwood preschool, Henry's office also serves as a library with a wall of books that are rotated in and out of the classrooms. New poetry books have recently been added to the collection because of research showing that children who memorize poems are better readers when they start school than other youngsters are.

The rooms all have book corners and cozy reading areas lined with pillows.

As teacher Carole Barlow gathers her 4- and 5-year-olds for a story, just the title of the book, *Milton the Early Riser*, a tale about a young panda who wakes up before everyone else, draws the children into excited conversation about their sleeping habits.

And as Barlow leads the children through a simple song about eating apples and bananas, she helps them work on their letter sounds by replacing the vowels and

"There is no question that if the goal is to have low-income children ready to learn on a par with middle-class kids, you must use every solid minute between birth and age 5," says Barbara T. Bowman, the past president of the Erikson Institute for Advanced Study in Child Development, based in Chicago.

U.S. Military Tackles Child-Care Quality

BY KATHLEEN KENNEDY MANZO

Janice R. Witte has seen both the worst and the best of child-care programs serving the offspring of military personnel over the past 24 years.

The worst included a cold, stark center in Baumholder, Germany, where two poorly trained staff members struggled to entertain and nurture 40 young children with only a well-worn Fisher-Price toy farm and a single tricycle.

That was in the late 1970s, when Witte began overseeing child-care programs for the U.S. Army.

The best, with highly trained and well-paid staff members, well-equipped facilities, and developmentally appropriate educational programs, are as common now as the former example was then.

From Problem to Model

Once derided as the "ghetto" of child care, the system of early-childhood centers serving all branches of the U.S. military has become a national model after more than a decade of intensive reforms and unprecedented resources.

"There was a lot of skepticism when the Army announced it was taking over child care," says Witte, who now directs the office of children and youth for the U.S. Department of Defense. Transforming the vast and disconnected array of programs, in which conditions were often deplorable and the problems deep, she says, seemed too great a challenge.

But the coordinated system for all branches of the military that emerged from that effort is now in many ways outstanding, says Adele Robinson, the director of public policy and communications for the National Association for the Education of Young Children. "It is better than most state systems," she says, "because it really has universal quality standards. Teachers have to have a certain kind of training, and centers have to be accredited."

Participating centers, primarily located on military bases, must meet the rigorous requirements that resulted from the Military Child Care Act of 1989.

Now, nearly all the 800 centers that serve more than 170,000 military children worldwide meet strict safety standards and have earned accreditation from the NAEYC.

The programs must use developmentally appropriate activities and materials. The system's nearly 10,000 child-care workers go through training before setting foot in a classroom, and about one-fourth have gone beyond that requirement and earned at least a Child Development Associate credential.

Jobs that paid workers in some locations less than $1 an hour two decades ago now average more than $10 an hour. Turnover has dropped from as high as 300 percent annually to about 30 percent, in a system that draws many workers from within the highly mobile military community.

"One of the most important things that they did overall was approach this systemically and look at what are all the pieces needed to improve the child-care system," says Nancy Duff Campbell, the author of "Be All That We Can Be: Lessons From the Military for Improving Our Nation's Child Care System," a report published in 2000 by the National Women's Law Center.

"They also recognized that unless you train and pay providers well, you are not going to have quality," she says.

The military child-development system serves the largest number of children of any employer in the country, according to the Defense Department. The system meets about 58 percent of the projected need for care.

Over the past several years, officials have been working to bring more home-based providers into the fold, a task that has proved more time-consuming because of the strict training and safety standards the military requires.

Several states are turning to the military model to improve their own child-care systems, according to Campbell. In Pennsylvania, for example, legislation was introduced last fall to encourage child-care providers to tackle the issue of quality.

"The military model is really attractive because it looks at the child-care program as a system," says Sharon C. Ward, the director of child-care policy for Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth, a group that has been pushing for the legislation for two years. ■

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consonants with different letters.

To the children, it's a silly song about "beating bapples and bananas" that gets them giggling. But to the teachers, it helps the youngsters become familiar with the sounds they'll need to know when they begin reading.

'No Magic Bullets'

In addition to writing academic standards for preschoolers, many states are increasingly involved in literacy initiatives directed toward younger children.

States' strongest literacy efforts in recent years have focused on improving the reading abilities of children in the primary grades. But many states are also implementing programs designed to give children the literacy experiences they need long before they enter school. For the most part, those have been family-literacy programs to improve the skills of both poor children and their parents. But some states are also beginning to target child-care providers and preschool teachers with information and training opportunities.

In its annual "State Developments" report on child care and early education, the Washington-based Children's Defense Fund says "it is critical that, as these initiatives grow, they move beyond efforts that involve solely traditional prekindergarten and Head Start settings and reach out to the broader child-care community."

"This is at very different stages in different states," says Adele Robinson, the director of public policy and communications for the National Association for the Education of Young Children. She adds that those efforts are often being provided by a variety of agencies and are often paid for by a mix of state, federal, and private money.

A list of activities in Vermont provides an example of just some of the early-reading programs that are active in the states. With corporate grants and donations, Born to Read—a program initiated by the American Library Association in which babies and young children receive books from their health-care providers—reached 7,000 children in the state last year. Some local libraries present story times for babies, toddlers, and preschoolers.

The state receives about $1.2 million in federal money to offer Even Start, a family-literacy effort designed to help both children from low-income families and their parents. And the Vermont Center for the Book, a nonprofit organization, offers early-literacy programs designed to be used by early-childhood teachers and child-care providers. Vermont also has a variety of professional-development efforts aimed at those who work with young children.

While early-literacy skills are a critical foundation for future learning, teachers should also seek to develop young children's other academic skills as well, *Eager to Learn* recommended.

Children should have plenty of time to explore mathematic and scientific principles, the book said. Young children, studies show, are capable of grasping more advanced concepts than previously thought, and preschool programs should allow them to experiment with measuring and predicting and with cause-and-effect relationships.

"We are so lucky that we have so many materials," says Irma Ortiz, a teacher at the Westwood preschool, as she puts plastic coins into a play cash register to get the table ready for a child's birthday party.

While traditional items such as easels, paint, blocks, puppets, and dress-up clothes are constant fixtures in the preschool's somewhat cluttered rooms, teachers also have access to cabinets filled with hands-on materials for mathematics and other activities. The children are introduced to new tasks almost every day.

After reviewing the research, the authors of the NRC report concluded that a direct-instruction method was no more effective than allowing children to have more freedom in the classroom. Using a variety of instructional techniques seemed to be the best approach.

"There are no magic bullets, no right curriculum, or best pedagogy," the authors wrote. "We know that children can learn a great deal in the care of an adult who is tuned into the child's current level of development and his or her developmental challenges."

In fact, Barbara T. Bowman, the past president of

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the Erikson Institute and the chairwoman of the NRC panel that wrote *Eager to Learn*, says one finding from the book that she believes is not receiving enough attention is the importance of the relationship between a child and the preschool teacher.

"I think that is such an important part: whether the child wants to please the teacher," Bowman says.

According to the book, "Children with more positive teacher-child relationships appear more able to exploit the learning opportunities available in classrooms, construct positive peer relationships, and adjust to the demands of formal schooling."

Most states are implementing preschool policies for 4-year-olds and sometimes 3-year-olds, Bowman says, but 2-year-olds—even though they were considered in *Eager to Learn*—have not received much attention.

"There is no question that if the goal is to have low-income children ready to learn on a par with middle-class kids, you must use every solid minute between birth and age 5," she says.

The Role of Accreditation

Of course, standards for high-quality early-childhood programs existed long before the U.S. Department of Education gave the National Research Council money to study the issue. The National Association for the Education of Young Children, a professional association for the early-childhood field, has standards for programs that seek to be accredited by the organization.

In fact, seven states require their pre-K programs, or other centers receiving state support, to be accredited or to be working toward accreditation.

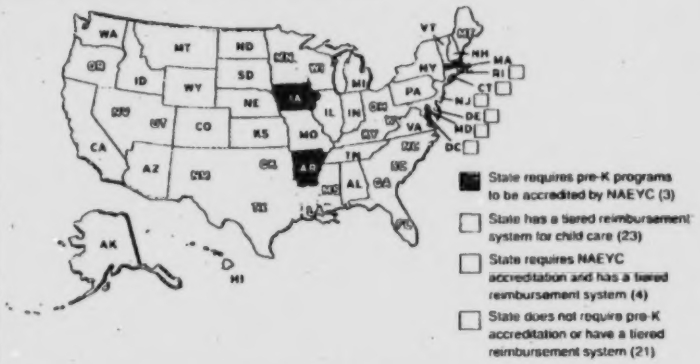
The NAEYC standards cover how the environment is prepared for children, such as whether the classrooms are welcoming and the toys and materials are appropriate for the age group. They also stipulate the group sizes and the number of children per adult in the classroom. For example, accredited programs have two teachers for every group of children, and groups of children range from six to eight for infants to 16 to 20 for 4- and 5-year-olds. The standards also emphasize teacher preparation and require staff members to have special training in child development or early education, as well as ongoing access to professional-development opportunities.

"Better-qualified teachers are a proxy for better things happening in the classroom," says Anne Mitchell, an early-childhood consultant in Climax, N.Y.

Teachers should also have time for planning, by NAEYC standards, and the program should offer a balance of outdoor and indoor activities. Finally, programs are open to parents and value their input about children's development.

While the NAEYC serves as an authority on designing high-quality programs, the organization—unlike other professional groups in education—has been reluctant to set standards for what children should know and do at certain stages.

Promoting High-Quality Early Care and Education


State requires pre-K programs to be accredited by NAEYC (3)
State has a tiered reimbursement system for child care (23)
State requires NAEYC accreditation and has a tiered reimbursement system (4)
State does not require pre-K accreditation or have a tiered reimbursement system (21)

A number of states are adopting regulations and incentives to improve the quality of early-childhood education. Seven states require all prekindergarten programs to meet the accreditation standards of the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Twenty-six states and the District of Columbia have tiered reimbursement systems to provide added funds to child-care programs that meet high-quality standards. According to the Children's Defense Fund, such systems generate between $11 and $127 in extra income per month per child in center-based care.

Note: The District of Columbia is included in the analysis. Total state count=51.
SOURCE: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2001; Children's Defense Fund, 2001

In Massachusetts, Local Collaboration

BY JOHN GENRING

Riverway Early Learning Center in Lawrence, Mass., exemplifies the state's approach to providing high-quality care for its youngest children by encouraging collaboration at the local level.

The center runs programs sponsored by seven different agencies that provide comprehensive child- and family-development services for pregnant women and for children up to age 5 who are not yet eligible for kindergarten.

Riverway grew out of the ideals of the state's major preschool initiative, Community Partnerships for Children. CPC promotes flexibility in providing services for preschool-age children through public schools, Head Start programs, community-based child-care centers, and family child-care homes.

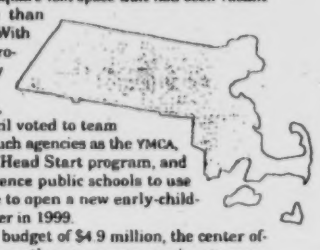
The program, which is financed through the state education department, is part of Massachusetts' broader school improvement efforts. Some 332 out of the state's 351 cities and towns are involved in the CPC program.

Each local program has a lead fiscal agent—a school district, a Head Start agency, or a licensed child-care provider—that is responsible for financial reporting and program monitoring. Local councils, made up of representatives from Head Start, the public school system, faith-based organizations, and other groups, make policy and design programs that govern the partnerships in participating communities. To ensure high quality in the collaborations, the state requires all participating prekindergarten programs to seek accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children, based in Washington. All family-care providers have or must seek a Child Development Associate credential. Preschool programs offered through the public schools must meet state education department standards.

Draft guidelines for preschool curricula, based on the state's K-12 curriculum frameworks, have been approved by the state board of education. Teachers will be required to document that they are using the guidelines in planning and evaluating curriculum activities.

A few years ago, local council members in Lawrence wanted to increase the number of preschool slots. The city had a waiting list of more than 300 children. Council members, who individually ran early-childhood centers, did not have the space to open new classrooms.

The Lower Merrimack Valley Regional Employment Board stepped up to help by donating a 15,000-square-foot space that had been vacant for more than 12 years. With money provided by the CPC program, the council voted to team up with such agencies as the YMCA, an Early Head Start program, and the Lawrence public schools to use the space to open a new early-childhood center in 1999.



With a budget of $4.9 million, the center offers, among other programs, services to more than 500 children and professional development to 67 early-childhood workers through an associate's degree program.

"The center has been a tremendous success, and it was only through this collaborative program that it could have been born," says Julie Tetreault, the program director of the Greater Lawrence Community Partnerships for Children Program.

"The advocacy community is really growing there," says Adele Robinson, the public policy director for the NAEYC. "It's one of the states that has connected both access and quality." ■

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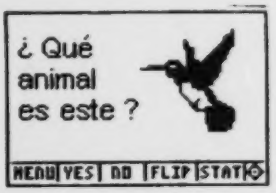

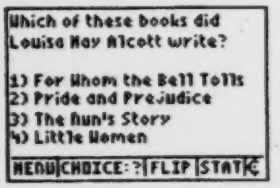
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2) Pride and Prejudice
3) The Nun's Story
4) Little Women
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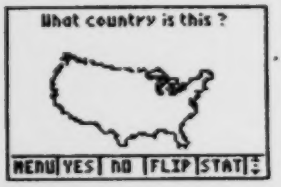

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TEXAS INSTRUMENTS

States Try to Specify What Young Children Should Learn

BY SCOTT SPICER

What should children be expected to know and to learn before they arrive at school? Despite an increasing body of research suggesting that children's early experiences are important to their ability to succeed in school, the debate persists about just what adults should expect from very young children and when.

For some, the idea of setting standards for preschool is a sign that educators and caretakers are taking seriously the importance of the early years for developing preliteracy, science, and mathematics skills, as well as ensuring healthy social and emotional development.

For others, though, the very term "preschool standards" conjures up thoughts of 3- and 4-year-olds under academic pressure, sitting through lessons and taking tests instead of enjoying, and learning from, unstructured play.

Today, of the 39 states plus the District of Columbia that finance preschool programs, 16 have standards for preschool in place. And six of those states—California, Connecticut, Georgia, Maryland, Michigan, and Washington—require that preschool programs adhere to those standards.

But no state with preschool standards currently uses them to hold preschool children responsible or accountable for their performance, as is sometimes the case with K-12 standards. Rather, the standards are meant to help teachers diagnose weaknesses in pupils' knowledge and abilities so they can address them at an early stage—before the children enter kindergarten or 1st grade.

Varied Content, Specificity

Across the states, preschool standards take many forms and vary greatly in their level of detail. In some cases, state preschool standards lay out the expectations for the programs and what opportunities they must offer children. Other states have set standards that describe what preschool children should be able to do.

Washington state's Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program, for example, centers its expectations on what preschools should teach, mandating that the curriculum include opportunities for children to engage in "active learning for decisionmaking and problem-solving."

In contrast, the standards of the Maryland Model for School Readiness focus more on what children should know, and provide indicators for how to assess whether they are meeting the expectations. One of Maryland's 20 early-childhood standards, for example, states that "the child applies mathematical concepts in formal and informal learning situations." The expectation is followed by examples of children's activities that would constitute meeting that standard.

Preschool standards vary not only on where expectations lie, but also in the content of those expectations. Some standards zero in on the basic knowledge children need to acquire; others begin to address more complex cognitive skills. And some states' standards focus more than others' on social development and the fostering of positive attitudes toward learning.

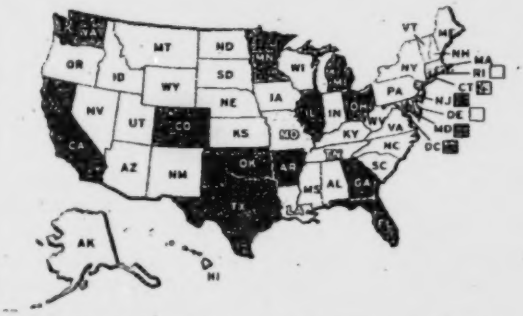
Georgia's preschool standards in "scientific development," for instance, emphasize some of the basic facts and concepts preschoolers should learn about their surrounding world. "Children will investigate and describe the states of matter (solids and liquids); children will recognize characteristics of different seasons; children will participate in activities to explore the Earth (rocks, soil, air) and sky (clouds, sun, moon, stars)."

In contrast, Connecticut's standards underscore the thought processes and cognitive skills children should develop as they gain concrete knowledge. Connecticut's standards for mathematical/scientific thinking require that preschool children "ask questions about and comment on observations and experimentation; use language that shows understanding of scientific principles to explain why things happen; engage in a scientific experiment with a peer or with a small group."

Social and emotional skills are important features of preschool standards in Connecticut and Maryland. Connecticut's emphasize conflict-resolution skills in young children. Maryland's include expectations for how children will develop and function both as individuals and as part of a group. Preschoolers in Maryland, for instance, are expected to "attempt new experiences independently" and to "persevere in activities independently." ■

States With Early-Childhood Standards

Curriculum or content requirements for state-financed prekindergarten and early-childhood education are intended to help all children start school ready to learn. Twenty states and the District of Columbia currently have, or are drafting, prekindergarten curriculum or content standards. Six of those states—California, Connecticut, Georgia, Maryland, Michigan, and Washington—require prekindergarten programs to use the standards.



State has specific curriculum/content standards for pre-K (16)

State has not set specific pre-K curriculum/content standards (30)

State is drafting pre-K curriculum/content standards (5)

Note: The District of Columbia is included in the analysis. Total state count=51
SOURCE: Erikson Institute, updated by *Education Week* 2001

"The standards discussion is not going to go away," says Barbara A. Willer, the deputy executive director of the organization. "But a number of people are still rightfully concerned about how standards will be used."

Meyer, from California's Santa Cruz County Office of Education, says she understands that position. To people who work in the preschool field, she says, standards communicate the "assumption that all children progress at the same rate, while there actually is a wide range of what is normal."

Other State Efforts

Aside from setting standards and writing curricula, states are also using a variety of other tools to encourage child-care and preschool programs to improve and even to achieve accreditation.

"People are coming at this from different points of view," the University of North Carolina's Clifford says. "This is all part of an evolution of getting toward some system that we have been totally lacking."

Twenty-six states and the District of Columbia have instituted what are known as tiered or differential reimbursement rates. That means a center that goes above and beyond state licensing standards or earns accreditation will receive more money from the state for the children it serves whose tuition is at least partly covered by child-care subsidies. Under those programs, centers can receive anywhere from 5 percent to about 40 percent above the market rate.

Research on such policies, conducted by William T. Gormley Jr., a professor of public policy at Georgetown University, shows that they can encourage program directors to seek accreditation. For example, differential reimbursement boosted the number of accredited centers in New Jersey by 33 percent in a single year.

"Clearly, they have the ability to influence the behavior of day-care-center directors, especially when the monetary reward to child-care providers equals or exceeds 15

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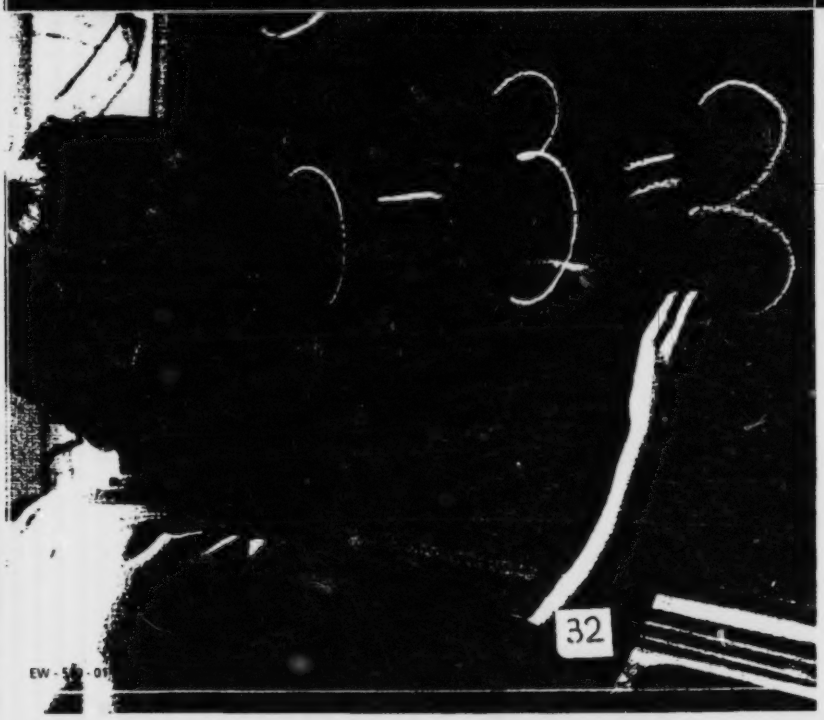

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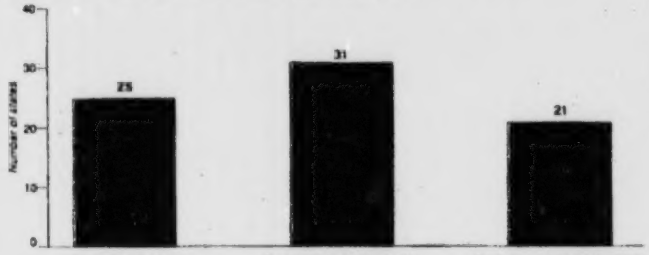
The great majority of the 39 states plus the District of Columbia that subsidize prekindergarten programs require that children receive vision/hearing tests, mental- or physical-health referrals, or provide immunizations to children. About half the states with pre-K programs require family caseworkers or outreach to families in the form of home visits as part of the program.



Note: The District of Columbia is included in the analysis. Total state count=51.
SOURCE: Gilliam, 2000; updated by Education Week, 2001

Programs Address the Whole Child

BY LINDA JACOBSON

Young children develop in many different ways. But leaps in one area—a slew of new vocabulary words, perhaps—are often followed by frustratingly slow steps in others, such as shyness around new children or a refusal to be toilet trained.

That's why experts stress that a strong program of early-childhood education should not only encourage children's cognitive growth and knowledge of basic concepts, but also pay attention to their nutritional needs, their social and emotional health, and other aspects of their physical development.

Since the 1960s, the best example of such a comprehensive approach has been Head Start, the federally subsidized preschool program for children from low-income families. While some states make limited attempts to provide additional services to young children, the vast majority don't come close to following the Head Start model.

Besides receiving an educational experience in the classroom, Head Start children receive medical and dental care and are served at least one nutritionally balanced meal each school day. Head Start's program-performance standards specify points at which children should be screened and follow-up evaluations should occur.

Parents are expected to volunteer in Head Start classrooms as well as serve on committees and councils that make decisions about the program. Family-support services, such as employment counseling and referrals to other professionals, are also part of the program.

Because Head Start was conceived as more than an educational program, supporters are opposed to moving it out of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and into the Department of Education—a proposal made by President Bush that is likely to be debated during next year's reauthorization process. While administration officials have said they don't intend to jeopardize the nonacademic part of the program, many advocates are concerned those services would be threatened.

"It is essential to understand that in order for children to excel in cognitive skills, the whole child must be nurtured," says a recent position paper from the National Head Start Association.

Where States Stand

An early evaluation of preschool services for poor children by the Department of Education found that Head Start programs were far more likely to provide supportive services than either school-sponsored programs or preschools in child-care centers were.

As state-financed preschool programs have expanded throughout the country in recent years, though, interest in the services Head Start provides has increased.

The most recent examination of the issue comes from Walter S. Gilliam, an associate research scientist at the Yale University Child Study Center. After surveying state prekindergarten programs, he concluded in a 2000 paper that "whereas Head Start programs are mandated to provide comprehensive services to all enrolled children and families, state-funded preschool programs are inconsistent in their delivery of these services."

His study of state-financed programs found that about half provided some comprehensive services, such as health referrals, hearing and vision screenings, and meals, but fewer had family caseworkers on site or conducted home visits.

Oregon is one state in which children in the state prekindergarten program receive the same level of comprehensive services as those in Head Start. By law, the state-subsidized program must meet the Head Start performance standards for health screenings, nutrition, and parent services.

Since 1989, the state has operated a Head Start program alongside the federal one. Together, the two serve about half the eligible children in the state.

"We know that if you want to impact the life of a young child, you cannot do that in isolation," says Anita McClanahan, the director of early-childhood-education programs for the Oregon education department. ■

percent," Gormley writes in a recent paper. Such policies, he adds, are a more effective way to encourage accreditation than requiring programs to meet those standards.

"A mandate to seek accreditation could result in half-hearted efforts that ultimately fizzle," he writes.

Gormley also points out, however, that it is the better centers that seek accreditation, and that tiered reimbursement rates should not be considered a replacement for stricter licensing standards and stronger monitoring systems for centers. "Differential reimbursement may do little to improve the quality of centers that need improvement the most," according to his study.

'Rooted in the Marketplace'

A related trend that has emerged in recent years is that of rating systems for early-childhood programs.

Borrowing from the common practice of making school report cards available to the public, the ratings are meant to inform parents about quality and ultimately put pressure on child-care centers to improve.

"It's rooted in the marketplace metaphor, recognizing that parents are severely handicapped when making child-care choices," Gormley says.

New findings from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development's ongoing "Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development" show that parents often make decisions about child care based on the convenience of the site or the provider, rather than quality factors. Mothers experiencing stress over such matters as income, work hours, or family situations were even more likely to choose child care that was the most convenient, but was also often of low quality.

One of the first states to implement such a rating system was North Carolina, but it offered only two ratings: A and AA. In 1999, the state legislature replaced that program with a five-star rating system for both center-based and family child care. Programs with one star meet the minimum licensing standards set by the state; stars are added as the educational level of the staff increases, as classroom environments receive higher ratings, and as the staff-to-child ratio improves.

"This allows programs to make incremental steps, to work on one dimension at a time," says Susan Russell, the executive director of the Child Care Services Association, a nonprofit child-care agency in Chapel Hill, N.C.

A study on the rating system, conducted by the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, found that the ratings were an accurate indication of the quality of an early-childhood program. A center with a three-star rating, for example, reported higher staff turnover and lower wages for teachers than those with four- and five-star ratings. Ratings not only serve as a guide to parents; they are also tied to the reimbursement level providers receive for subsidized children.

Colorado and Kentucky are using similar programs to give centers and providers the incentive to improve.

"The state of the industry has been so poor that a disciplined and concentrated effort to improve a setting is bound to be successful," says Douglas Price, a former bank president who founded Educare Colorado, an initiative to raise the quality of early-childhood programs that is now operating in four counties and reaching about 1,500 children. Through Educare, centers receive technical assistance with the aid of "site coaches," who help them work on weaker areas of their programs.

The effort, which is being evaluated by the Santa Monica, Calif.-based RAND Corp., has already led to lower turnover rates and higher morale among teachers, Price says. "You get this culture of performance," he says. "Training itself has a positive benefit."

The hope among experts and advocates of early-childhood education is that through such improvements, the public will eventually demand excellent early-learning experiences for all children.

Talking about North Carolina's five-star system, Russell says people are beginning to pay attention to the ratings of centers in their communities. "This is another way to raise the bar," she says. "As you see the scores improve, you begin to ask, 'If 95 percent of the state is at a two-star level, why can't we move to a three?'" ■

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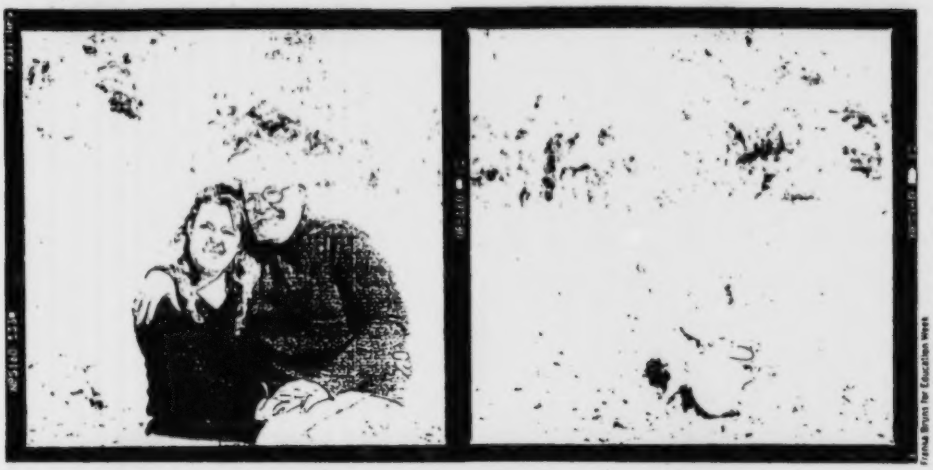

Janice Burch, a child-care teacher in Rockville, Md., relaxes with daughter Rebekah Robinson and 2-year-old grandson Justin at the Robinsons' home in Shelocta, Pa. Robinson also worked as an early-childhood educator, but quit her job because of the low pay.

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Nurturing Caregivers

Low pay, minimal training requirements, and high turnover characterize those who care for preschoolers.

BY LINDA JACOBSON

High staff turnover, low pay, and a dead-end career path are what those who care for and teach young children in Illinois can look forward to.

Researchers at National-Louis University detailed those conclusions in a report last summer, as well as finding that only one-fifth of the more than 330,000 preschoolers in the state were attending programs in which teachers were required to have a four-year degree and be certified.

Another 330,000 children younger than 5 were in informal child-care settings where no staff qualifications were necessary, according to the study, by the Center for Early Childhood Leadership on the university's Wheeling, Ill., campus and the Illinois Network of Child Care Resources and Referral Agencies.

Much of the same can be said about almost every other state.

At what experts say is one of the most important times for learning in a child's life, children at the preschool level often have teachers who are required to have no more than a high school education and a few hours of training.

Yet research shows a connection between the readiness of children for school and the formal education and specialized early-childhood training of classroom teachers, and how well they're compensated.

Based on the strength of the research, the National Academy of Sciences has recommended that children in center-based programs be taught by a teacher with a bachelor's degree as well as special training in early-childhood education.

"Sadly, there is a great disjunction between what is optimal pedagogically for children's learning and development and the level of preparation that currently typifies early-childhood educators," the academy said in a 2000 report.

"You are not going to find another field that is as strangely configured in terms of what is required," says Pamela O. Fleege, the vice president of the National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators and an associate professor of childhood education at the University of South Florida in Tampa. "You can enter into the field with little or no training whatsoever. It can be a really scary thing for parents."

In fact, 30 states don't insist that teachers in child-care centers have any training before they begin working in a classroom, according to the Institute for Leadership and Career Initiatives at Wheelock College in Boston.

What's more, those who already hold a degree or continue their training in early-childhood education are often not rewarded for the time they spent to improve their knowledge and skills.

Working with young children is often a minimum-wage occupation, and low pay forces many employees to seek employment in K-12 schools or leave the field altogether.

"Low pay for early-childhood educators continues to discourage qualified teachers from entering the field, and wide disparities in qualifications and compensation lead to high turnover rates," says Paula J. Bloom, a co-author of the report on Illinois and the director of the National-Louis early-childhood center. "People working in Starbucks make more than many of the professionals educating our youngest children."

The Washington-based Center for the Child Care Workforce, which tracks wages and working conditions in the child-care and early-education field, reported in 1998 that salaries had risen little over a nine-year period.

Annual turnover rates, meanwhile, had improved somewhat since 1988, but the average rate at the centers in the five cities studied remained at 31 percent.

In addition, a 2001 study focusing on centers in three northern California counties—conducted by the same group—found that three-fourths of the teachers and 40 percent of the top administrators who worked at a center in 1996 were no longer on the job four years later.

In contrast, while turnover among new teachers in K-12 schools can approach levels that are similar to those in early-childhood education, overall turnover among public school teachers is much less, around 10 percent annually.

The 2001 California study also found that the replacements at the child-care centers were not as well-educated. About half the former teachers had four-year degrees, while only one-third of the new teachers had earned one.

And the researchers found that teachers in the three counties—Santa Cruz, Santa Clara, and San Mateo—were more likely to stay at their jobs if they were paid higher wages and if they worked with colleagues who were college-educated and trained in child development.

Teaching in a preschool program, instead of a center that also accepts infants and toddlers, might bring someone a higher salary.

According to the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average annual salary for preschool teachers in 1999 was $19,610, about $4,000 more than the amount earned by those who identified themselves as child-care workers.

A survey of state prekindergarten programs, conducted by Walter S. Gilliam and Carol H. Ripple of Yale University, shows that pre-K programs also have higher expectations of their teachers.

About half the state-financed pre-K programs Gilliam and Ripple studied required teachers to have a bachelor's degree in early-childhood education or development.

Researchers at the Washington-based Urban Institute, in a paper released last year on worker-compensation issues, noted that one strategy for improving wages is to put state prekindergarten teachers on the same salary schedule as public school teachers.

But even if that happens, pre-K teachers still might not feel respected as professionals. Barbara T. Bowman, the past president of the Erikson Institute for Advanced Study in Child Development, a graduate school in Chicago, says she sees little evidence that preschool teachers—including those who teach in a public school-based program—are accepted into the larger K-12 community.

Child Development Associate Credential

Among leaders in the field, the belief is that children—no matter what kind of child-care or preschool program they attend—deserve teachers whose training at least mirrors that of K-12 teachers.

"The goal has been to say that regardless of the setting, children have the same needs—to be cared for by personnel who understand them as developing human beings," says Carol Brunson Day, the president and chief executive officer of the Council for Professional Recognition, a nonprofit organization in Washington that is working to improve the skills of those who teach young children.

The council awards the nationally accepted Child Development Associate credential, which is granted to teachers in center-based programs, home-visiting programs, and family child-care homes. A specialized credential is also available from the council for providers working in bilingual programs.

Before taking the assessment that leads to the CDA credential, providers must be at least 18, have a high school diploma or the equivalent, and have clocked a minimum of 480 hours of experience working with children and 120 hours of child-care education, covering eight content areas.

Between 10,000 and 12,000 such credentials are awarded each year.

Earning a CDA, Day says, has served as a "bridge between the informal community and the more for-

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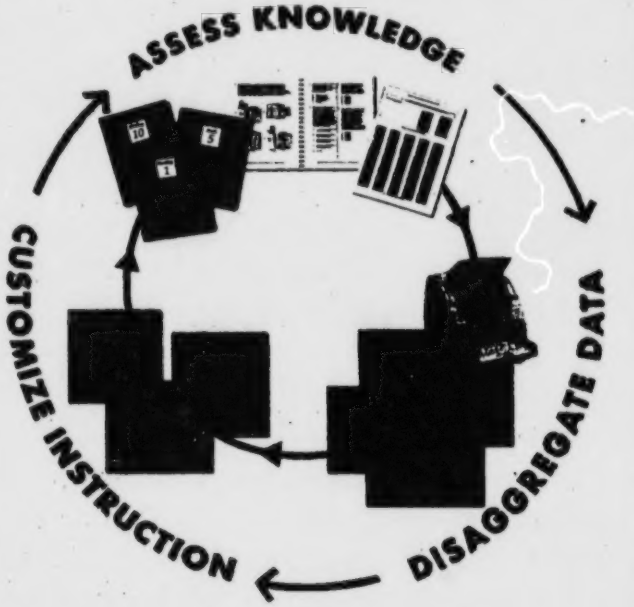

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mal training community."

Providers who take workshops and seminars before they earn the credential often go on to earn college credit.

Over time, the CDA has also been incorporated into state child-care-licensing regulations. Forty-six states, plus the District of Columbia, list the credential somewhere in their rules for staff qualifications. But requirements vary by state.

Some require certain teachers, such as a lead teacher, to hold CDA status; others allow those working as directors of centers to have a CDA credential in lieu of more education. Traditionally, the CDA has been the credential carried by thousands of teachers in the federal Head Start program. In fact, surveys of those who hold CDAs, conducted by the Council for Professional Recognition, have found that many entered early-childhood education as parents of Head Start children.

Head Start Requirements

But the 1998 reauthorization of Head Start by Congress raised the bar. By 2003, 50 percent of teachers in the preschool program for disadvantaged children must have an associate's degree in the early-childhood field.

At a congressional subcommittee hearing last summer, Wade F. Horn, the assistant secretary for children and families in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, reported that the percentage of teachers with at least a two-year degree had increased from 32 percent in 1997 to 41 percent in 2000.

"We're well on our way" toward meeting the goal of 50 percent, says Townley Mailler, the director of the government-affairs division of the National Head Start Association.

A portion of the increases in Head Start funding during the Clinton administration was aimed at helping teachers earn their degrees. Teachers without associate's degrees would receive $1,300 a year toward tuition.

Head Start advocates, however, were concerned last year that President Bush's proposed $125 million increase in funding for the program—bringing the total to $6.3 billion—would barely cover cost-of-living increases, much less additional training costs.

The president's primary goal for Head Start has been to strengthen the educational component of the program and improve the prereading skills of the children who attend.

"It's fine to retool the program, but you're still going to need resources," Mailler says.

Leaders of the National Head Start Association argue that setting degree requirements for teachers in the program is a "simplistic solution." They say that teacher performance is "best addressed by training and guidance."

"While the attainment of higher educational levels should always be the goal of individual teachers, the NHSA believes that mandating a specific degree is unwise and may produce more problems than it may solve," the group's position paper says.

Child-care and preschool directors already face tremendous obstacles in scheduling training and releasing teachers to continue their education. Directors often have to balance the desire to send their employees to conferences or courses against the need to cover the classroom, and decide whether to spend money on training or raises for the staff.

"In the world of child care, whether you're nonprofit or for-profit, we all face that same dilemma," says Jim Greenman, the senior vice president for education and program development at Bright Horizons, a Boston corporation that provides employee-sponsored child care in 28 states. "Everyone has to make those kinds of calculations."

Greenman says Bright Horizons has tried to take a combined approach by encouraging employees to seek and attend outside professional-development opportunities when possible, while also providing in-house training, including an up front, two-day orientation for all new employees. The company is also trying to be flexible and creative by allowing self-study and Internet-based training, he added.

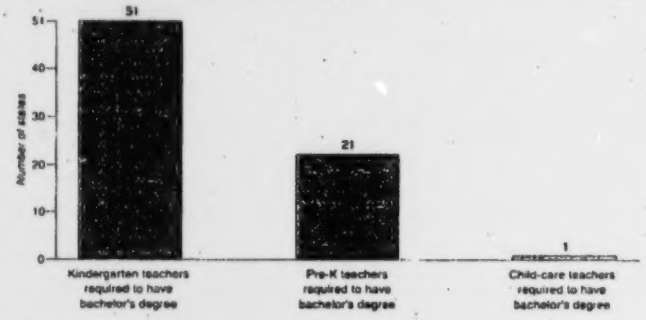
Improving the Child-Care Workforce

Currently, 18 states implement the TEACH (Teacher Education And Compensation Helps) Early Childhood Project. The program, first implemented in North Carolina in 1990, gives scholarships to child-care workers so that they can complete early-childhood-education coursework and receive increased compensation as their credentials improve. In 2001, states awarded more than 14,000 scholarships with $17 million in TEACH funding.

Note: The District of Columbia is included in the analysis. Total state count=51.
SOURCE: TEACH Early Childhood Project, 2001

Degree Requirements for Early-Childhood Teachers

While all states and the District of Columbia require kindergarten teachers to obtain bachelor's degrees, far fewer states require the same of pre-K teachers or teachers in child-care centers. Only Rhode Island requires child-care teachers to have a bachelor's degree.



Note: The District of Columbia is included in the analysis. Total state count=51.
SOURCE: Trynosky, 2001; NCEDL, 2001; Wheelock College, 2001

Higher Education 'Roadblocks'

Those who do pursue college-level training in early-childhood education might find their colleges and universities lacking an adequate supply of instructors.

A national survey of schools that offer teacher-preparation programs in early-childhood education found that such institutions did not have enough faculty members to meet the demand.

In fact, "a 76 percent increase in early-childhood faculty would be needed if all current early-childhood teachers were required to obtain a bachelor's degree," according to the National Center for Early De-

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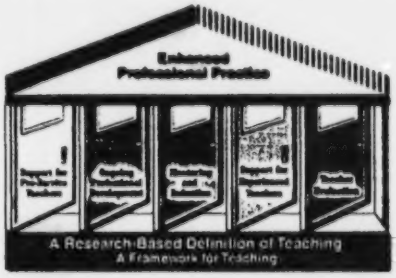

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velopment and Learning, which conducted the survey.

Researchers at the federally subsidized center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill also found that the heads of early-childhood departments said that attracting and retaining "ethnically and linguistically diverse" faculty members was their greatest challenge.

That same concern resonates throughout the world of teacher preparation, says Jane Liebbrand, a spokeswoman for the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education.

"The teaching force is mainly white, female, and middle-class, and students are increasingly at risk and diverse," she says.

The UNC survey also showed that early-childhood teacher-preparation programs tended to employ the greatest percentage of part-time faculty members at their institutions, and that students in the programs didn't always receive the training they might need to work with some children.

For instance, 95 percent of the associate's degree programs reported that learning to work with infants and toddlers was part of the curriculum. Yet only 60 percent of the programs required one or more courses in the subject, and only 63 percent required students to spend some time in the classroom with children that age.

Finally, the survey found that many students in two-year teacher-preparation programs—especially those earning associate's degrees in applied science—had trouble transferring their course credits into four-year institutions.

"This situation creates roadblocks for early-childhood personnel," the authors wrote.

As for the demand for professors, Fleege of the National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators agrees that "there aren't enough students coming out at the doctoral level that would want to teach."

But she says she expects improvements in the future. "There are a lot of people in the pipeline," she says. "It will catch up."

"The problem is we are are trying to reform an essentially very shattered, broken system."

MARCY WHITEBOOK, Consultant, Center for the Child Care Workforce

Colleges and universities with early-childhood programs, Fleege notes, widely accept the standards for teacher preparation set by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, which defines the early-childhood period as birth through age 8.

Those standards were recently revised and approved by NCATE. Drawing from the latest research findings about the best ways to teach young children, the updated standards place greater emphasis on what early-childhood educators should be doing to build children's early academic skills and knowledge.

But Marilou Hyson, the NAEYC's associate executive director for professional development, says her organization And Compensation Helps) uses public and private money for scholarships for early-childhood workers.

North Carolina Investment in Teaching Pays

BY KATHLEEN KENNEDY MANZO

Early-childhood experts in North Carolina were near desperation when they hitched their hopes to a tiny pilot project aimed at improving the training of child-care workers.

A study of the workforce had highlighted the turmoil caused in child-care programs by the poor education, high turnover, and low wages that had long been the standard among those in the field.

That was in 1990, when most child-care workers in the state had little more than a high school education, and the average wage was about $4.50 an hour without benefits. Some 40 percent of the workforce left the field each year.

With about $23,000 in grant money, 21 workers were sent to their local community colleges to work toward associate's degrees in early-childhood education. Their success helped launch a statewide effort in 1993.

'Really Could Do Something'

"As the field started to look at this issue more closely, there was such a level of depression and a feeling of a lack of empowerment about our ability to do anything to effect change in education, compensation, and retention," says Susan Russell, who started the TEACH Early Childhood Project in 1990. TEACH (the acronym stands for Teacher Education

"It became apparent pretty quickly that we really could do something that didn't take huge amounts of money to at least start making a difference in the field," says Russell, the executive director of the Child Care Services Association, a nonprofit research and advocacy group in Chapel Hill, N.C., that administers the $3 million program.

TEACH is now a budding program in 17 other states. The program is expected to spread even more as educators and state lawmakers begin responding to research suggesting that children who attend child-care and preschool programs with trained teachers are better prepared for school than those whose caregivers have little formal training for the job. In North Carolina alone, the program has enabled more than 5,000 child-care workers to earn Child Development Associate certificates, associate's degrees, or bachelor's degrees.

Compensation Up

The North Carolina program, which includes bonuses or raises for early-childhood workers who continue their education and requires recipients to stay in the field for six months to a year, took off under former Gov. James B. Hunt Jr. TEACH will receive more than $2 million in state, foundation, and corporate funding this fiscal year.

By combining the initiative with two other programs—WAGE$, created in 1994 to raise the salaries of low-paid teachers and directors, and the 2-year-old TEACH Early Childhood Health Insurance Program—the state has been able to transform what many saw as poorly paid, short-term jobs into careers.

As a result, the programs have also improved the quality and stability of the workforce, many experts say.

WAGE$ has helped increase compensation—in some cases, by 30 percent or more over time—for more than 8,000 workers in the state.

"What they've done well in North Carolina is focus policymakers' attention on the underlying salary and benefits issue," says Adele Robinson, the director of public policy for the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Since 1990, turnover in North Carolina has dropped from 42 percent to 31 percent, according to Russell.

And last year, for the first time, the number of TEACH recipients working toward a college degree exceeded those seeking a simple, four-credit credential.

"The fact of the matter is there are more teachers in this state with more education around early childhood than ever before, and there are more parents in the state who understand what they should be looking for in a program for their children," says Stephanie Fanjul, who ran the state's child-development division under Gov. Hunt. ■

nization is not implying that children's developmental needs shouldn't be considered. What might be appropriate in a kindergarten classroom can be quite inappropriate with a group of toddlers. "It's been very challenging not to send the message that early-childhood teachers should be prepared in the way that elementary teachers have been prepared," Hyson says.

The standards that deal with recognizing children's home language and culture have also been strengthened. And greater attention is given to the skills teachers need to work in programs that include children with disabilities or developmental delays.

"I think a lot of institutions didn't understand the depth to which this needed to be included," Hyson adds.

Institutions that want their programs for preparing early-childhood teachers to be NCATE-accredited will now have an 18-month period to phase in the new requirements.

But just because colleges might be on the same page about the preparation of early-childhood professionals doesn't mean policymakers who make decisions about teacher licensing are following the same guidelines.

A license to teach early-childhood education in one state, in fact, may mean something very different in another state. The Council for Professional Recognition found 12 different age configurations throughout the country in a 1999 survey.

"For example," the report said, "one state offers a credential titled Early Childhood Education that prepares teachers to work with children 0 through 8 years of age, yet another state offers a credential with the same title that prepares teachers to work with children 3 through 8 years."

That "lack of common terminology," the writers argued, "creates a mosaic that interferes with communication among professionals and limits reciprocity among states."

But the council's report, a follow-up to a similar survey from 1988, did find some trends that were encouraging to people in the field.

First, more states were developing regulations for early-childhood teacher education that included preparation for those working with children younger than 5. And second, the researchers found the state agencies in charge of teacher licensing were more supportive of the belief that specific knowledge and skills were needed to be successful at teaching young children.

Young children need "personnel who understand them as developing human beings," says Carol Brunson Day, the president and chief executive officer of the Washington-based Council for Professional Recognition.

Resources Expanding

State legislatures are gradually beginning to act on what experts in early-childhood education have been telling them.

A growing number of states now have some initiative either to help providers acquire more education or to supplement their wages.

"There is no doubt that there are more resources flowing into the child-care workforce for the purpose of encouraging educational attainment and rewarding educational attainment," says Marcy Whitebook, a senior research associate at the Institute for Industrial Relations at the University of California, Berkeley. She's also a consultant to the Center for the Child Care Workforce.

The best-known program that helps providers gain education in the field—and gives them something to show for it—is the TEACH Early Childhood Project. Under TEACH, which stands for Teacher Education And Compensation Helps, child-care providers receive scholarships to attend school and bonuses or raises from their employers when they complete their studies. The recipients, in turn, commit to working in their sponsoring child-care centers for at least another year, a feature that reduces staff turnover.

The program, which began in North Carolina in 1990, is based on the principle that everyone involved in early-childhood education—providers, program directors, college instructors, professional associations, and state officials—has to be involved to achieve success.

As a result, TEACH "has been more than just a scholarship program," according to a report that marked the 10th anniversary of the initiative. "It has been a catalyst for many system changes, both in and out of North Carolina," the report pointed out. "As the availability of scholarships has increased, demand for more relevant coursework and a more flexible education-delivery system have increased."

North Carolina teachers who complete the coursework receive an average raise of 10 percent, which is more than the project's organizers had expected. And turnover in the state dropped from 42 percent in 1994 to 31 percent in 1999.

The program's success is now being felt outside North Carolina. An additional 17 states are using both private and public money to offer the program.

"In the beginning, states were hesitant to jump in with public dollars," says Susan Russell, the executive director of the Child Care Services Association, the Chapel Hill, N.C.-based nonprofit agency that developed the TEACH project. But that is now changing.

Other models to improve wages—thereby helping to keep people in the field—have also emerged throughout the country.

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- Supporting Education Reform

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Vast Responsibilities, Minimal Pay

BY KATHRYN M. DOHERTY

As a nation, the United States pays about as much to people who watch its cars as to those who take care of its children, according to the latest wage figures from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

With an average annual salary of $15,430 in 1999, child-care workers earned about as much as parking-lot attendants and dry-cleaning workers.

Preschool teachers—a category that includes workers who identify themselves as teachers in child-care settings—didn't fare much better. They earned an average salary of $19,610 in 1999, less than half of what elementary school teachers made.

But while teacher shortages and inadequate salaries for K-12 educators are persistent issues in public-policy debates, far less discussion takes place about the nation's child-care workforce.

As schools are being held more accountable for student performance, attention has increasingly turned to the issue of how prepared children are emotionally, socially, and academically when they arrive at school.

According to the National Household Education Survey, 70 percent of 4-year-olds in the United States were involved in center-based nonparental care and education programs in 1999. A majority of children receive care outside their homes beginning with their first birthdays.

An 'Insufficient Pool'

Given such statistics, it is clear that child-care providers are a major presence in the lives of young children.

"One of the strongest predictors of child-care outcomes is the quality of the teacher," says Marilou Hyson, the associate executive director for professional development for the National Association for the Education of Young Children, based in Washington.

Yet, according to a Center for the Child Care Workforce study, the "insufficient pool of workers to care for and educate young children prior to kindergarten seldom registers on the radar screen of public awareness."

A profile of early-childhood-care providers from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Youth shows that the average center-based child-care provider nationwide earned roughly $7 an hour in 1999.

Ninety-seven percent of the child-care workforce is female, and the training and educational requirements for child-care providers vary widely across the states.

According to Wheelock College's Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, fewer than half the states require any preservice training for child-care providers.

And even in those states that do require training, the expectations often are minimal.

'Alarmingly Unstable'

Not surprisingly, given the low wages, turnover among child-care providers is high.

"Then and Now," a longitudinal study by the Institute of Industrial Relations at the University of California, Berkeley, says the teaching staffs in child-care centers are "alarmingly unstable."

According to that study, a full 76 percent of child-care providers employed at centers in 1996 had left by 2000. Nationwide, it's estimated that about one-third of child-care providers leave their jobs each year. ■

Continued from Page 39

Researchers at the Urban Institute found that "policymakers are usually reluctant to take action that directly relates to the wages and benefits of a specific group of workers."

"But," the think tank noted in its study last year, "the continued concern over the poor quality of many child-care programs, the limited training of many child-care workers, and lower-income families' lack of access to quality care have led to some innovative efforts to address worker-compensation issues more directly."

One such program, launched last year with $1.75 million, is REWARD Wisconsin, which stands for Rewarding Education With Wages And Respect for Dedication.

Money from the federal Child Care and Development Fund block grant will be given annually to Wisconsin providers and teachers who have attained specified levels of education. In the first year, stipends ranging from $500 to $1,500 will go to those who have earned at least an associate's degree and have been working in licensed center-based or family child-care programs for at least two years.

"It's nice to be able to recognize people who have been in the field for a long time," says Jeanette A. Paulson, a program coordinator with the Wisconsin Early Childhood Association.

Other states have concentrated their efforts on helping providers get the health-insurance coverage they often don't receive from their employers. According to the Urban Institute, four states—California, Michigan, North Carolina, and Rhode Island—have worked to make low-cost health insurance available to providers, including those who operate family child-care homes.

Advocates for early-childhood education have also pushed at the federal level for a few initiatives to improve the skills and salaries of early-childhood professionals.

For example, the Early Childhood Educator Professional Development program, a proposed amendment to President Bush's education plan that was moving through Congress last year, would provide $10 million for one-time competitive grants to community partnerships that train people who work with children from birth through age 5. The money would be targeted to low-income communities and focus on helping teachers identify and prevent behavioral problems, as well as work with children who have been abused.

Efforts are also under way throughout the country to improve the skills of center and preschool directors. Those people are often in the job because they were excellent teachers, but they may have little business and administrative knowledge, says Pam J. Boulton, the director of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee children's center and a member of the faculty there.

"I think we have systematically underestimated what it takes to be the director of a children's center," Boulton says, listing business sense, customer-relations abilities, and skills in human resources among the qualifications.

The University of Wisconsin is one of several sites statewide now offering a six-course, 18-credit credential for directors. About 140 people have graduated from the program, which began in 1996, and another 500 are taking the courses. Wheelock College's Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education turned up 14 states, as well as the District of Columbia, that offer a director's credential.

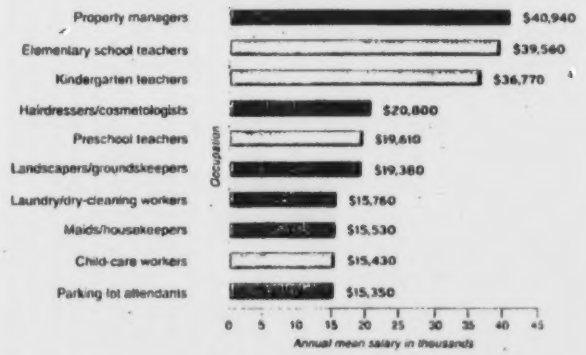
But even with momentum building around such issues, the University of California's Whitebook and others in the field maintain that significantly more public funding needs to be committed toward improving the skills and salaries of professionals in early-childhood education.

The many initiatives, in fact, often share some of the same characteristics of the "nonsystem" of early care and education in the United States, Whitebook argues.

"They are scattered, they're not universal, and there is not enough infrastructure," she says. "The glass is fuller than it was, but the problem is that we are trying to reform an essentially very shattered, broken system." ■

Where They Rank: Compensation for Early-Childhood Educators and Care Providers

Compared with a mean hourly wage of almost $20 for people who manage property, self-identified child-care workers watch over children for about $7.40 per hour. Preschool teachers fare only slightly better, with a mean hourly wage of $9.40.



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates, 1999

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Adequate Financing

As interest in early-childhood education grows, states struggle to build upon a patchwork funding system.

BY JESSICA L. SANDHAM

Call it the crazy-quilt approach. When it comes to paying for early-childhood education, states are increasingly working to patch together aid from a variety of state and federal sources to better meet the needs of young children and families.

Driven by such considerations as the need for more child care following the 1996 welfare overhaul, new research linking early learning to later school success, and the reach of the education standards movement to younger children, states are putting more money into children's preschool years than ever before.

Unable to piece together enough funding to offer early-childhood programs to all children, though, states are primarily tailoring their patchwork style to serve youngsters faced with a variety of risk factors, including children from single-parent or low-income families and those with special needs.

Still, a growing number of states are seeking ways to give more families access to high-quality early-education programs, even if current state budget realities mean that universal access remains a faraway goal for most.

"There's no question that there's a significant trend toward more investment in prekindergarten programs," says Louise Stoney, the founder of Stoney Associates, a research and consulting firm in Averill Park, N.Y., that specializes in early-childhood policy. "This isn't a poor person's issue, or something to be ashamed of," she says. "This is something that all people need."

Currently, 39 states and the District of Columbia underwrite prekindergarten programs for at least some of their 3- to 5-year-olds. In addition, 21 states plus the District of Columbia supplement federal Head Start dollars to serve additional poor children.

State spending for prekindergarten programs now exceeds $1.9 billion annually, according to a 50-state survey conducted by *Education Week* for *Quality Counts*. That's a significant commitment compared with the estimated $190 million states spent in 1988.

"If we were going to invent the public school system today, knowing what we know, it would look different," says Anne Mitchell, the president of the Climax, N.Y.-based consulting firm Early Childhood Policy Research and the author of a 2000 report on prekindergarten finance. "Anyone with any sense realizes that preschool is beneficial."

Even though state spending on prekindergarten programs is greater than ever before, Mitchell notes, it is still dwarfed by that of the federal government, which pumped $6.2 billion into Head Start in fiscal 2001 alone. "States are making a large commitment," Mitchell says. "But it's not just states that are needed to close the gaps."

Prekindergarten spending represents only one piece of the funding puzzle for early-childhood care and education.

Federal and state subsidies for child care and money available under the federal welfare block grant, along with a hodgepodge of funds for other programs for young children, often flow through state human services and other agencies separate from education departments.

As a result, it is hard to gauge the full scope of states' commitment to early-childhood programs, especially without a central authority at the federal level empowered to gather data on such spending.

"Administratively, we just don't have our act together," says Stoney. "We need one early-care and -education data set. And unless Washington does it, there's no way to get accurate data from all 50 states."

Nevertheless, Stoney and other advocates maintain that ample evidence is available showing that the states' increased commitment to young children also extends to expanding access to child care and improving the types of services children receive in such settings.

Building on the child-care subsidies provided through the Child Care and Development Fund, a federal program established as part of the broader welfare-reform legislation, many states significantly boosted their own spending on such subsidies.

In a November 2000 report commissioned by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, researchers reported that states had dramatically increased their spending on child care for low-income

Judy Sheffield of Acworth, Ga., buys lottery tickets at the Split Second store. Proceeds from the state lottery help finance Georgia's prekindergarten program.

Kevin Horan for Education Week

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families between 1997 and 1999.

"The National Study of Child Care for Low-Income Families" pointed out that in the 17 states that served as the report's sample group, the median spending increase on child care in that three-year period alone was 78 percent. States also worked to improve the quality of such programs, supporting more education and training for child-care providers in addition to providing salary enhancements, the study found.

Spending on child care has also grown as states have devoted a greater portion of their federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, or TANF, dollars to reducing the number of poor families on waiting lists for subsidized child care. Of the $24 billion states received through TANF block grants in 2000, almost 25 percent was directed to child care, according to a recent report by the Washington-based Center for Law and Social Policy.

"States have responded to the availability of funds in an incredible way," says Ann M. Collins, the director of program and policy analysis for the National Center for Children in Poverty, an organization based at Columbia University that helped prepare the November 2000 study of child care for low-income families. "Between their own funds, the TANF funds, and the CCDF block grants, they've served a tremendous number of additional children with child-care subsidies," she says.

Despite the growing government commitment, early-childhood experts note that parents still pay the lion's share of the costs of child care. A 1997 report, "Financing Child Care in the United States," found that family fees accounted for 60 percent of the total revenue sources supporting early care and education. Government sources paid 39 percent, and the private sector covered the remaining 1 percent.

For public higher education, in contrast, tuition and fees made up only 23 percent of total revenue, state appropriations covered 42 percent, and the remaining 35 percent was made up of federal, local, endowment, and grant money.

Mitchell, who wrote the report along with Stoney and Harriet Dichter, says the current funding breakdown likely remains more or less unchanged from that of 1997.

"I have no reason to believe it's changed dramatically," Mitchell says. "There have been increases in the federal share, but there are also increases in the number of parents getting child care and paying for it themselves."

Children's advocates also note that government subsidies for child care are based on the going market price of child care, rather than what it actually costs to provide high-quality care. As a result, even as states allocate more federal money for child care, the quality of the care often remains unchanged.

States base their child-care subsidies on market rates, and "the market doesn't look at quality; the market looks at access," says Adele Robinson, the director of public policy and communications for the Washington-based National Association for the Education of Young Children. "The market looks at what parents can afford to pay. That's a very different question from what you need to do to provide quality care for children."

Broader Access

But even as states try to increase child-care subsidies to needy families and shorten the waiting lists for them, some are also seeking to give working-poor and middle-income families greater access to higher-quality child-care and prekindergarten programs.

Early-childhood experts say the movement to provide broader access to such programs is necessary for reasons both practical and political.

By opening the doors of high-quality care and education programs to a greater number of families, states would likely increase the number of students who start kindergarten ready to learn—and secure greater support for sustained, long-term financing of such programs in the process.

"Public schools do well because middle-income kids go there," says Robinson of the NAEYC. "To get the political will for early-childhood programs, you're going to need some buy-in—and not just from families that are on the cusp of welfare."

Georgia, which provides preschool to 4-year-olds throughout the state without regard to their families' incomes, has been held up as a model of universal access since it first began the program using lottery revenues in 1995.

While no other state has matched the level of access the Peach State provides, Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, and Oklahoma are among those that have preschool programs designed to serve children from families across a range of income levels—if they live in the communities designated for aid.

New York lawmakers this year appropriated $225 million for the state's universal pre-K program, which is slated to be phased in fully and subsidized at an annual level of $500 million. During the phase-in period, school districts are receiving aid for prekindergarten programs based on a formula that includes such factors as property wealth and the number of eligible children in a district. The program aims to ensure that all 4-year-olds in the state have the opportunity to attend preschool programs by the time the initiative is in full operation.

In New Jersey, prekindergarten programs are supposed to be available to all 3- and 4-year-olds who live in 30 high-poverty districts. The program was enacted in 1997 as part of the resolution of *Abbott* v. *Burke*, a long-running school-finance-equity lawsuit.

Connecticut also provides universal access to preschool programs to children in specific geographical areas, namely those in districts serving large numbers of poor youngsters.

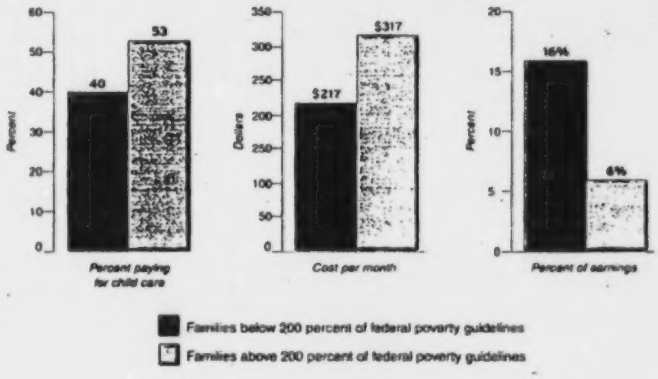
In addition, districts in Oklahoma can opt to participate in a state program that provides preschool to 4-year-olds regardless of family income. Just over half the state's 4-year-olds are now served by the program.

Many states, though, shy away from a universal approach to prekindergarten because they see it as too costly, especially now, with the slowdown in the economy.

Richard N. Brandon, the director of the Human Services Center at the University of Washington in Seattle,

Child-Care Expenses for Families

According to data from the Urban Institute's Assessing the New Federalism Project, working low-income families and single parents spend a considerably higher share of their earnings on child care than better off families do. Lower-income families pay less in actual dollars than higher-income families, but their financial burden is greater.



SOURCE: Reprinted with permission of the Urban Institute's Assessing the New Federalism Project, "Child-Care Expenses of America's Families," by Giannarelli and Barsimantov, 2000. The entire report may be viewed at: http://newfederalism.urban.org

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State Policies on Kindergarten Are All Over the Map

BY MICHELLE GALLEY

While more states are offering full-day kindergarten, and some go so far as to make attendance compulsory, others don't require districts to offer the earliest grade at all.

When kindergarten began in the United States in the mid-1800s, it took two forms. One was publicly financed "charity kindergartens" for poor children, similar to today's state-subsidized preschools aimed at low-income youngsters. The other took the form of privately run centers. Parents paid tuition for their children to attend, akin to the way private preschools work now.

Kindergarten is based on the teachings of Friedrich Froebel, a German educator who believed that children were not properly prepared to enter school, and that mothers needed coaching in the best ways to care for their offspring.

Shortly after the turn of the 20th century, proponents of educating children at an early age began lobbying for more kindergarten classes. "The movement was never to make kindergarten compulsory," says Barbara Beatty, an associate professor of education at Wellesley College and the author of *Preschool Education in America*. "It was to mandate that districts offer kindergarten."

Now, more than 100 years later, state policies still vary on how—and even if—districts must offer kindergarten.

Today, every state pays for some kindergarten: either for a portion of the school day or in selected districts. Twenty-five states subsidize all-day kindergarten statewide or in districts that choose to offer it, as does the District of Columbia.

But even as talk of the importance of high-quality preschool education reaches unprecedented levels, some states—Alaska, Colorado, Idaho, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, and Pennsylvania—do not require districts to establish kindergartens, according to an *Education Week* survey conducted for *Quality Counts*.

"Most of these states where you see that kindergarten is not mandated are typically locally controlled states when it comes to education," says Michelle Exstrom, a policy associate with the National Conference of State Legislatures.

Currently, 13 states—Arkansas, Delaware, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, New Mexico, Ohio, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia—and the District of Columbia require children to attend kindergarten. In Rhode Island, Tennessee, and West Virginia, the law requires that youngsters attend kindergarten even though they do not have to start school until they are 6, the age at which children customarily enter 1st grade.

The age at which children enter school has been a topic of debate in recent years. In North Dakota last year, a bill to lower the entrance age from 7 to 6 failed. Lowering the age for admission would mean more children attending school earlier, thereby driving up costs, says Exstrom.

All-Day Kindergarten

Meanwhile, legislation that would extend the school day for kindergartners from the traditional 2½ hours to a six-hour, full-day program has been moving through statehouses around the country.

Proponents of all-day kindergarten say that providing pupils with more instructional time will better prepare them for the demands of 1st grade by giving them more exposure to the curriculum and to the school environment. For many children, an all-day program also cuts down on the number of places they are sent to during and after the school day.

Only eight states require districts to offer full-day kindergarten. The District of Columbia public schools also provide full-day programs.

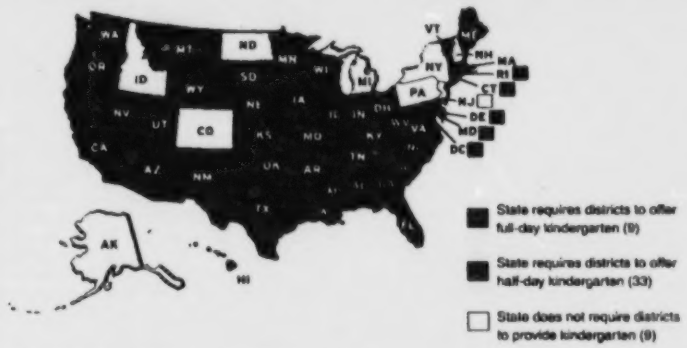
Oklahoma passed legislation last year that requires districts to offer full-day kindergarten. But the mandate will not take effect until the state increases per-pupil pre-K-12 spending to what state legislators deem to be an adequate level.

To solve the space problems many districts face in extending kindergarten programs, Oklahoma lawmakers gave district officials the option of contracting with neighboring districts or with licensed public or private child-care programs. The district would put licensed teachers in all those kindergarten classrooms, and they would be operated as public schools.

Finding teachers to fill the extra slots can also be an obstacle to extending the kindergarten day. Though certification requirements for kindergarten teachers vary by state, school administrators often shift other elementary teachers, who may not have the same training in early-childhood education, to kindergarten. ■

State Requirements for Kindergarten

Most states require districts to provide at least half-day kindergarten for 5-year-olds. Eight states and the District of Columbia require districts to provide full-day kindergarten. Children must attend kindergarten in 13 states—Arkansas, Delaware, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, New Mexico, Ohio, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia—and the District of Columbia.



Note: The District of Columbia is included in the analysis. Total state count=51.
SOURCE: Education Week, 2001

has been working to create various models for universal financing of preschool, along with Sharon Lynn Kagan, a professor of early-childhood and family policy at Teachers College, Columbia University, and a senior research scientist at Yale University's Child Study Center.

Brandon says that many state policymakers dismiss universal access to early-childhood education as too expensive, based on what he calls "back of the envelope" calculations that fail to take into account the various approaches states might use to expand access to preschool.

Ultimately, Brandon says, four variables determine the cost of state-sponsored early-childhood programs: the maximum income level at which a family is eligible, the age at which a child is eligible, the relationship between the family's income and the level of subsidy, and teachers' salaries.

"We're not expecting states to move to full coverage of universal care in one fell swoop," Brandon says. "We're saying if you do this kind of systems design, understand what quality will cost, and understand the design trade-offs, you'll get the most coverage for the fewest bucks. Then you can implement the system incrementally as you're moving toward an effective, universal system."

Ohio education officials have been working with Kagan and Brandon to get a more accurate picture of the costs of expanded preschool access in the Buckeye State. Susan Tave Zelman, the state superintendent of public instruction, says she hopes to leverage various resources—including the state's current spending on child care—and set up a more comprehensive system of

Court Orders N.J. Preschool Program

BY ROBERT C. JOHNSTON

New Jersey's expansive preschool program for needy children, which is the result of a school finance lawsuit, is changing the state's education landscape and may be a harbinger of things to come in other states where school aid is being litigated.

As part of the 3-decade-old *Abbott* v. *Burke* suit, the New Jersey Supreme Court in 1998 ordered the state to provide universal preschool to 3- and 4-year-olds in 30 mostly urban districts. The remedy was designed to help ensure that disadvantaged children are exposed to the same kinds of high-quality learning experiences in school as their peers from more affluent communities. Nearly 29,000 youngsters in those communities were expected to enroll this school year in the preschool programs, which are available up to 10 hours a day for 240 days a year. As many as 60,000 children could qualify for the program, however.

Another 24,000 children in those districts have been placed in all-day kindergarten since 1999 as part of the court mandate.

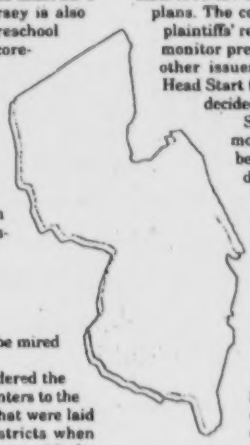
The Garden State also ordered 100 additional districts in high-poverty areas to offer half-day preschool for 4-year-olds, beginning last fall. New Jersey has 603 school districts.

"This is such an incredible opportunity for our children," says Cynthia Rice, a senior policy analyst with the Association for Children of New Jersey. "When I go to conferences," Rice adds, "people from across the nation are in awe over what we are doing for our children."

New Jersey's *Abbott* preschool program also has what may be the most rigorous standards of any state-sponsored preschool program in the country. For example, *Abbott* classrooms are capped at 15 pupils and must be led by teachers who have earned the new preschool-3rd grade certification. Each class must have an adult aide as well. New Jersey is also drafting curricula that link preschool coursework to the state's K-12 core-learning standards.

Moreover, the state is supposed to pay for facilities, including temporary classrooms, to accommodate the new student load.

Providing preschool programs in the *Abbott* districts, as well as the all-day kindergarten, will run an estimated $355 million this fiscal year.



Legal Squabbles Persist

But the program continues to be mired in legal wrangling.

In 2000, the supreme court ordered the state to hold private child-care centers to the same high academic standards that were laid out for the 30 public school districts when those high-poverty districts contract with the centers for preschool services. The state had planned to allow a slower phase-in of those standards.

The plaintiffs and the state were again in court last September. David Sciarra, the executive director of the Education Law Center in Newark, which represents the *Abbott* plaintiffs, charged that the state had failed to provide facilities in a timely manner, thus limiting the number of pupils that districts could accommodate.

The plaintiffs also want federally financed Head Start programs to receive *Abbott* money in order to enhance the programs' services and meet the court's preschool standards.

In October, the court issued a preliminary decision that imposed strict deadlines for the state to review and approve *Abbott* preschool plans. The court, however, rejected the plaintiffs' request that a special master monitor preschool compliance. Several other issues, including a decision on Head Start funding, were expected to be decided by late last year.

State officials contend that money for the program has been adequate, and that some districts have done a better job of planning for influxes of children than others.

Former Gov. Donald T. DiFrancesco, a Republican, successfully championed the passage of a $5 million incentive program last year to attract 400 new *Abbott* preschool teachers. They were offered signing bonuses of up to $6,000, along with laptop computers and forgiveness of their student loans.

The preschool process "has not been perfect," acknowledges Margretta Fairweather, the assistant state education commissioner for early-childhood education. "If I had a magic wand, all the facilities would have been available one year before the requirements."

But she suggests that the big picture is impressive: "This is like nothing else in the world. ... I don't think anyone else has moved this fast to do this much." ■

early care and education statewide.

"It's an issue of realignment and prioritization, and thinking about how we're spending existing dollars as well as new dollars," Zelman says. While state education officials would like to provide access to preschool programs to all children, she adds, they understand that it's important to work incrementally first.

"We're political realists, and we understand what the economic situation is," the Ohio schools chief says. "But we need to do a better job of educating our policymakers. It's a question of bringing all the players to the table."

'Sin Tax' Financing

While most states provide money for early-childhood programs through general-revenue dollars, a growing number are tapping new sources to expand the services they offer young children. Two prominent examples include Georgia, which in 1995 established a state lottery to help pay for its universal preschool program, and California, where voters approved a cigarette tax in 1998 to shore up financing for improved child care and other programs designed to benefit young children.

Missouri also uses a "sin tax" to help pay for early-childhood programs, drawing on revenues from the state's riverboat-gambling industry to provide competitive grants for preschool programs in public and private schools.

In Kentucky, meanwhile, the legislature opted to use 25 percent of the state's tobacco-settlement money—$56 million every two years—to pay for a wide array of programs promoting the health and education of young children. The initiative includes everything from a public relations campaign encouraging women to avoid smoking and drinking during pregnancy to an incentive program for child-care centers that strive to lower their child-staff ratios and improve employee training.

"Now, we have a full circle of education reform," says Kim F. Townley, the executive director of the Kentucky governor's office of early-childhood development. "From the womb to the tomb, so to speak."

Arkansas lawmakers last spring also set up a funding pool for early-childhood programs by authorizing a new 3 percent tax on beer. The beer tax is expected to raise some $9.7 million a year. Twenty percent of it will go to child-care subsidies; 80 percent will go toward improving the educational quality of home- and center-based care through the Arkansas Better Chance program.

Most of the beer tax will replace current spending, rather than provide supplemental dollars, however. The same year the tax was approved, the Arkansas legislature cut $6.6 million out of the existing $9.9 million budget for the ABC program, first begun in 1992. Revenues from the new tax will replenish that money and then some, but it won't provide the kind of increases early-childhood educators had hoped for.

Regardless, Paul D. Kelly, the senior program coordinator for Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families, says he's pleased to see early-childhood issues playing prominently in the legislature.

"The real victory for us was hearing an hour of floor debate on the absolute, essential need for early care and education to promote school readiness and take care of the needs of working families," Kelly says. "What a wonderful thing to experience." ■

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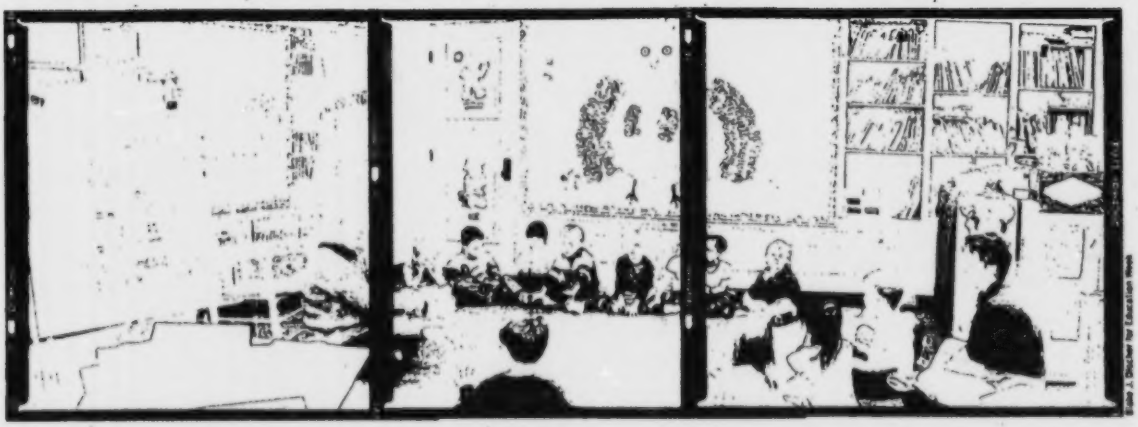

Measuring Results

There's a growing demand to assess the results of early-childhood programs, but what's appropriate?

BY DAVID J. HOFF

Somewhere, a 4th grader is gripping a No. 2 pencil in his sweaty palms, about to take a test that might determine his school's accreditation or future funding. At the very least, the results from the child's school will be posted on the Internet or printed in the newspaper.

Somewhere else, a high school senior may be reviewing the algebra she's learned, trying once again to pass an exam that will make or break her attempt to earn a high school diploma.

Meanwhile, a group of 4-year-olds is building a tower with blocks, playing a game, or telling a story to a teacher. Like the standardized or standards-based tests given to their older peers, the young children's play may be used to evaluate the program that they attend, inform parents whether their children are ready to move on to kindergarten, or help the teacher understand what challenges and experiences the pupils need to make the developmental leaps common in their age group.

But the experience will have none of the high pressure of entering a new situation and trying to master a set of skills that dominates testing in the K-12 arena.

The contrast demonstrates that assessment and accountability are completely different in preschools, Head Start, and other early-childhood programs that a majority of children experience before they enter the K-12 system.

Assessments in early-childhood programs must be different from the kinds of tests youngsters take after they're in school, experts say, because young children are especially subject to wide variations in their development. Their skills grow in fits and starts, so an assessment of their academic skills one month could be out of date the next.

Moreover, along with their cognitive skills, preschoolers are also working to develop their motor and social skills, which are best judged by observation rather than a formal assessment.

As state and local policymakers start to demand data that show the impact of their spending on early-childhood programs, assessment experts find themselves searching for ways to obtain that information accurately, fairly, and in a way that's best for children.

"It's very complex," says James H. Squires, a consultant in early-childhood education for the Vermont education department. "What we're grappling with is: How do you do it at all? How can you get meaningful, accurate results without doing damage?"

Some state officials are requiring local programs to evaluate themselves using whatever method they choose. Others specify the kinds of assessment tools to be administered. Still others are collecting statewide data by giving a specific assessment or a combination of them to a sample of children in the state's early-childhood programs.

So far, though, none has come up with a uniform or even widely accepted method for assessing young children.

"There hasn't been something that people could call a standardized way to assess children this age for accountability purposes," says Catherine Scott-Little, a senior program specialist for Serve, the Greensboro, N.C., federally financed research laboratory serving the Southeastern states.

The Foundation

As state leaders begin wading into testing young children, most are building their systems around the recommendations of a 1998 report issued by the National Education Goals Panel, a federally subsidized committee of state and federal policymakers.

The panel convened a group of early-childhood experts to define how states and districts should monitor progress to ensure that children enter school ready to learn—the first of the education goals set for the nation that were to be achieved by 2000. At the

Gail Baker, left, and Dee Ledbetter use everyday situations to observe and evaluate the development of prekindergartners at the Stepanski Center in Waterford, Mich.

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end of 1999, the goals panel reported that the goal had not been reached.

The 40-page booklet released by the panel in 1998 suggested that early-childhood programs evaluate individual children's skills, starting at age 3, and aggregate them as part of a formal appraisal of the programs. Not until children reach the 3rd grade, the report concluded, should high-stakes assessments be used to hold schools, students, and teachers accountable.

"Before age 8, standardized achievement measures are not sufficiently accurate to be used for high-stakes decisions about individual children and schools," the booklet said.

But early-childhood programs must conduct assessments for other purposes. Under federal special education law, districts and federal programs have been required to screen children who are suspected of having a disability. Head Start programs, for example, must assess children's physical and learning abilities within 45 days of their enrollment.

Such screening "helps to identify children who may be at risk for school failure," says Samuel J. Meisels, the president of the Erikson Institute for Advanced Study of Child Development, a Chicago graduate school. "It can be done simply, inexpensively, and fairly accurately."

"There hasn't been something that people could call a standardized way to assess children this age for accountability."

CATHERINE SCOTT-LITTLE
Senior Program Specialist, Serve

According to the Erikson Institute, 15 states and the District of Columbia require diagnostic or developmental screening for children in prekindergarten.

Assessing youngsters to determine the success of the programs in which they're enrolled, however, is new territory for most states, Scott-Little of Serve says.

Of the statewide pre-K programs, "very few have begun to invest in assessment," says Meisels, one of the creators of the Work Sampling System, an assessment instrument that many states use in early-childhood programs and kindergartens.

Getting Started

Even those states in the forefront are just now getting started and searching for the best ways to evaluate children's progress and programs' success.

North Carolina, for example, collected data from 1,034 kindergartners in fall 2000. The study tried to determine, for the first time, how well a variety of early-childhood programs prepared children to enter school.

Researchers gave a representative sample of 10 percent of the state's new kindergartners assessments that gauged an assortment of skills, such as vocabulary, literacy, and social development. The research team selected portions of several different assessment batteries, including the Woodcock Johnson Test of Achievement-Revised Form A and the Social Skills Rating System, because the team couldn't find one product that fit all its needs, according to Kelly Maxwell, who headed the project.

"Some people thought there would be one magic test out there," says Maxwell, a research investigator

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at the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. "It didn't work that way."

The study also surveyed parents, teachers, and principals about the school readiness of kindergartners.

In the end, the published report included only general findings and none of the specific score data that are common in accountability systems for the upper grades. For example, the study found that North Carolina's kindergartners "generally knew the names of basic colors," and that they had "demonstrated a wide range of social skills" that "were about as well-developed" as those of kindergartners nationally. Their language and math skills fell below the national averages.

Despite the generalities of the conclusions, the report has made a valuable contribution in the debate over how to improve early-childhood programs in North Carolina. "This is what we know about our children and our schools," Maxwell says. "It sets the stage for a discussion."

Maryland collected information on 1,300 kindergartners using portions of the Work Sampling System. In that system, teachers continually observe their students and note their progress in such areas as language, mathematical thinking, scientific thinking, physical development, and social and personal skills.

Even though scores from the Work Sampling System are based on teacher observations, the results are as reliable as older students' standardized-test scores, according to studies conducted by Meisels and his colleagues at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, where until recently he was a professor of education.

In a report published last year, Maryland concluded that about 40 percent of the state's kindergartners entered school "fully ready to do kindergarten work." Half needed "targeted support" so they could succeed in their first year of school, and 10 percent required "considerable support" from their kindergarten teachers.

In particular, the children needed the most help in mathematical and scientific thinking, language development, and social studies.

"I don't think we were surprised by anything," says Trudy V. Collier, the chief of language development and early learning for the Maryland education department. "There's a real need for children to be read to, talked to, and encouraged to participate in conversations."

Last fall, every kindergarten teacher evaluated every student using the same set of Work Sampling System indicators. The state hopes to use the results to continue tracking school readiness.

While the overall results are general, individual student outcomes help teachers design curricula to meet their classes' needs, Collier says. "They begin to establish very early what a child's specific needs and gifts may be," she says.

Other states are taking similar approaches, according to Scott-Little. She led a brainstorming session last fall for officials in the states that are furthest along in assessing early-childhood programs.

Missouri's School Entry Profile collects data from new kindergartners, and the state uses the results to shape policies for early-childhood programs. In Ohio, teachers are collecting data on 4-year-olds' skills so the state can evaluate the early-childhood programs. The process may also help teachers prepare curricula for their classes, Scott-Little says.

Do-It-Yourself Approaches

While some states are coming up with statewide ways of measuring young children's abilities, and the success of programs serving them, others are letting

Head Start Programs Must Gauge Children's Progress

BY LORI MEYER

In the realm of early-childhood education, no program has more stringent accountability demands than Head Start.

As of this school year, local operators of the federally subsidized preschool program must conduct assessments that gauge the academic, social and emotional, and physical development of the disadvantaged youngsters in their care.

Experts anticipate the push for higher quality and accountability that began during the Clinton administration will continue as a high priority under President Bush.

At a conference held last summer, U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige joined first lady Laura Bush and U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy G. Thompson to encourage early-child development.

"We need to build a bridge between powerful scientific research, homes, and preschools, and make sure that adults know how vital it is that children have strong cognitive development, even before they enter school," Paige said in his speech to the conference.

The move to judge the early-childhood programs by the progress of their pupils, instead of processes and resources, stems from the reauthorization of Head Start in 1994.

The law's new outcomes-based system outlined five overarching objectives and 24 subcategories for Head Start programs to meet.

The objectives focused on enhancing the growth and development of children; strengthening families as the primary caregivers; providing children with educational, health, and nutritional services; linking children and families to needed community services; and ensuring well-managed programs involving parents.

In the subsequent reauthorization of Head Start in 1998, Congress reinforced the new direction by establishing eight broad categories of child development and school readiness: language development, literacy, mathematics, science, creative arts, social and emotional development, approaches to learning, and physical health and development.

Weighing Compliance

Local Head Start programs are now required to use performance measures for self-assessments, peer reviews, and program evaluation.

The 1998 reauthorization mandated that programs gather and analyze data on 13 specific outcomes related to language, literacy, and numeracy skills. Grantees are to use other indicators to guide them in producing their own instruments for ongoing assessment.

Head Start agencies can evaluate their programs through such methods as teacher observations, analysis of children's work and performance samples, parent reports, or even the direct assessment of children.

Under terms of the federal law, Head Start programs had to begin implementing the assessments in the fall of 2000. Assessment systems were to be operating fully by the 2001-02 school year.

To make sure they meet the regulations, the federal Administration for Children and Families began monitoring the systems last year. A team from the agency visits the Head Start sites to determine compliance with what are called Head Start Program Standards and Performance Measures. The comprehensive on-site reviews take place at least once every three years.

In addition, the Family and Child Experiences Survey, launched in 1997 by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, collects and analyzes data on a number of the performance measures to learn more about the strengths and weaknesses of the Head Start program nationally.

Researchers are following a cohort of 3,200 children and families in 40 Head Start programs to provide longitudinal data on outcomes. Initial findings have revealed that Head Start narrows the gap between disadvantaged children and their more advantaged peers in key aspects of school readiness. ■

individual programs monitor themselves.

Michigan, for example, has a prekindergarten program serving more than 25,000 youngsters in 1,000 classrooms, but it has only three part-time consultants to evaluate them, according to Lindy Buch, the state's supervisor of curricular, early-childhood, and parenting programs.

The state has chosen to train local program directors to evaluate their own programs, using a tool created by the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation, a leading research and development group on early-childhood programs. In addition, the Ypsilanti, Mich.-based High/Scope is conducting in-depth reviews of randomly chosen programs to give a statewide snapshot of the program's success.

Evaluators score the program on a variety of measures, including the quality and size of the facility, the extent to which the curriculum is tailored for each child, and the amount of time teachers spend evaluating pupils' progress. In Georgia, local officials can choose from one of several approved assessment programs, including the High/Scope evaluation tool.

Meanwhile, school districts in Vermont are conducting school-readiness screenings of prekindergartners, says Squires, the state's early-childhood consultant. But the state is urging districts to conduct the evaluations in a nonstandardized way. Many local programs are inviting children in for a "play based" assessment. They enter a classroom and demonstrate their physical, language, motor, and cognitive skills while they play with toys, create art, and build structures.

"We did not want to create an individual assessment or a group assessment for every child where they were being asked to sit down and perform specific tasks," Squires says.

The federal Head Start program is taking a similar approach to complying with the 1998 law that requires every Head Start center to conduct evaluations based on performance indicators.

While many of the performance indicators are selected by federal administrators, local centers are required to do their own evaluations of children in the areas of language and literacy, mathematics, science, creative arts, social ability, interest in learning, and physical and motor skills.

The instruments they use must be validated for the way they're being applied. For example, a center may not rely on a test intended to individualize curriculum as part of its program evaluation.

The Early Childhood Literacy Assessment System "gives a complete knowledge of where the kids are and what they need."

CHARLIE SOULE, Associate Education Officer, New York City Board of Education

Programs were collecting such information in various forms already, whether as part of the disabilities-screening requirement or their own curriculum planning. What's new to Head Start programs is tabulating the data to figure out the overall outcomes of participating children.

"This is—almost in every case—a new idea," says Thomas Schultz, the director of the program-support division of the federal Head Start bureau.

For all the activity aimed at assessing children to ensure that they received the services they needed or to communicate their abilities to parents, he says, "it

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was rare that programs would use that information at a management level. What we're talking about now is a new strategy."

Kindergarten: Stakes Rising?

While the evaluations conducted throughout early-childhood programs don't carry high stakes for the children involved, the nature of assessment changes once children enter kindergarten because of the nationwide goal to have every child reading at grade level by grade 3.

Still, such assessments are administered to drive instruction rather than reward or penalize the child.

Michigan has devised a literacy assessment in which teachers evaluate a child's reading skills starting in kindergarten, with monitoring continuing through 3rd grade.

The one-on-one testing is designed to help teachers formally measure a child's skills and then determine what help he or she needs to take the next steps toward independent reading.

The state plans to expand the program so children in the pre-K program take it, too, says Buch, the Michigan education official.

The New York City public schools started a similar program—called the Early Childhood Literacy Assessment System, or ECLAS—in 1999.

The battery of tests assesses children on a wide range of literacy skills from kindergarten through 2nd grade.

"It gives a complete knowledge of where the kids are and what they need for literacy," says Charlie Soule, the city school official who runs the testing program.

Such programs can be great tools for helping children reach the goal of becoming independent readers, according to one reading expert.

In an evaluation of a California reading program, children in schools that conducted regular classroom assessments showed better reading results than those in other schools in the state, says Marilyn J. Adams, a Harvard University research associate specializing in reading.

"The best [an assessment] can do for you is say, 'You need to sit with this child and figure out if he's having trouble with this dimension,'" Adams says. Once teachers do that, they respond with individualized instruction.

But such programs also can eventually become a back door into high-stakes testing, some experts warn. If a child isn't reading well in the 2nd grade, and the teachers know that the pupil will face a state reading test in the 3rd grade, they may be tempted to hold the boy or girl back a grade.

"The pressure for results ... may force early-childhood programs and administrators to adopt relatively simplistic methods."

SAMUEL J. MEISELS, President, Erikson Institute

"The literacy assessments," Meisels of the Erikson Institute says, "are only a problem if they are expected to accomplish more than they are intended to do—which, at least in the case of the Michigan profile, is to enhance teaching and learning."

But with the weight of accountability systems looming and a new emphasis on academic skills, early-childhood educators may be inclined to rely on assessments in ways that are unfair to young children, he adds.

"The pressure for results—both in skills and in accountability—may force early-childhood programs and administrators to adopt relatively simplistic methods of teaching and assessing that are not successful for young children," Meisels says. ■

Michigan Measures Youngsters' Needs

BY DAVID J. HOFF

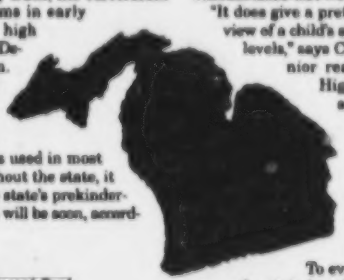
Every fall, every kindergartner in Michigan sits down with his or her teacher to read a book. The child might not recognize the event as a test. But the teacher is trained to look for clues to the child's emerging literacy skills. Does he hold the book right-side up? Can he identify the front and back covers? Does he recognize letters and words that rhyme?

Over the course of the 20-minute session, the answer to such questions will help the teacher identify ways to place the student on the path toward becoming a competent, independent reader by the end of 3rd grade—the goal set by Michigan Gov. John Engler in 1998.

Through the individual sessions, which occur periodically from kindergarten through grade 3, teachers get more information than a standardized test could ever provide.

"This allows a teacher to find out what each child's individual needs are and tailor instruction to their needs," says Steven A. Gaynor, the superintendent of the 6,600-student Royal Oak schools, north of Detroit. "What I've heard from teachers is, despite the fact that it's time-consuming, [the assessment] has strengthened the early-elementary reading program."

"When you use a standardized instrument, it doesn't tell you what to do tomorrow in the classroom," adds Lindy Buch, the curriculum supervisor for programs in early childhood through high school at the Michigan Department of Education. "This is an assessment that leads directly to instruction."



Although the voluntary testing program is used in most K-3 classrooms throughout the state, it isn't widely used in the state's prekindergarten programs. But it will be soon, according to Buch.

Different Purpose, Different Test

While the literacy profile helps teachers decide what they need to do week to week for individual students, the test is not meeting all the assessment needs of the state's early-childhood programs.

To gauge whether children are ready to enter kindergarten, the state also helps teachers evaluate the youngsters' social, physical, and other skills throughout their early-childhood experiences, using the High/Scope Child Observation Record for Ages 2½-6.

The structured instrument helps teachers record their observations of children's behavior in the classroom on a regular basis. While there is no single event that looks like a "test," researchers say the results are as reliable as a standardized test would be.

"It does give a pretty clear and quantitative view of a child's social, motor, and cognitive levels," says Charles F. Hohmann, a senior research associate for the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation, the Ypsilanti, Mich., nonprofit research group that publishes the assessment. "It's not a soft measure. We produce the same kind of statistics that you'd see from a test."

To evaluate specific programs, the state is using yet another measure: the High/Scope Program Quality Assessment. The assessment evaluates various ingredients of a center's program—such as the experience and education of staff members and the type of activities children engage in—to judge whether the center is offering good experiences for children.

The High/Scope Foundation uses the assessment to monitor a random sample of 1,000 classrooms in the state's prekindergarten program. Local educators conduct their own evaluations using the same instrument. Though the results are "very preliminary," Buch says, they suggest that the preschools are successful. "Does this work?" she says.

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Early Learning

Data on State Early-Childhood Policies and Programs Have Large Gaps

BY KATHRYN M. DOHERTY

At first glance, the tables, charts, and statistics on early childhood in *Quality Counts 2002: Building Blocks for Success* suggest that a vast array of information is available about the care and education of preschool-age children in the United States. But appearances can be deceiving.

One of the most startling findings of this year's report is how little is actually known about the care of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers—children in a period that some have called the "black hole" before entry into the formal public education system.

The tables that follow feature the best information available from some of the most comprehensive sources of data on young children.

In addition to information about early-childhood programs from *Education Week*'s annual, 50-state survey, the tables include data collected by: the Washington-based Children's Defense Fund, the National Center for Children in Poverty at Columbia University, the National Center for Early Development and Learning at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the Washington-based National Association for the Education of Young Children, the Washington-based Children's Foundation, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. All those groups and institutions were generous in sharing their findings with *Quality Counts*.

The indicators on program access, funding, standards, teacher quality, and early-childhood assessment provide some details on the programs and policies states have in place for kindergartners and preschoolers, including how many children are served and how much money states are devoting to various early-childhood initiatives.

But the data only begin to shed light on what may be important discrepancies in quality across the various types of early-childhood

programs. They also raise serious concerns about the access that families have to early-childhood services in the United States and the adequacy of those services.

Access and Funding: An Uneven Picture

The *Education Week* survey found that every state provides at least some funding for kindergarten, and 41 states require districts to offer kindergarten, as does the District of Columbia. But only eight states and the District of Columbia require that kindergarten be offered for the full school day. And only 13 states and the District require 5-year-olds to attend. Approximately 3.4 million youngsters attended kindergarten in the United States in 2000, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

By updating existing data collected by the National Center on Early Development and Learning, the Children's Defense Fund, the National Center for Children in Poverty, and the Yale University Child Study Center, *Education Week* also pieced together a picture of preschool and prekindergarten efforts across the states. Today, 39 states and the District of Columbia use state money to support prekindergarten programs. But the characteristics of those programs vary widely.

A few states—Georgia, New York, and Oklahoma—are phasing in prekindergarten statewide for any 4-year-old whose parents want it, regardless of parental income. Other states—such as Connecticut, Kentucky, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Texas—are paying for large-scale initiatives aimed at reaching as many 4-year-olds as possible, especially those from poor families.

Meanwhile, states such as Alabama, Colorado, and Iowa are piloting pre-K programs or are providing financial support to help local community groups collaborate in expanding early-childhood services.

Some states, including Ohio and Oregon, have focused their prekindergarten efforts on expanding Head Start or have modeled their own state programs after the federal initiative for disadvantaged preschoolers. Ohio alone spent about $100 million in state money to expand Head Start programs in 2001.

Still other states—Arizona, Florida, and Pennsylvania among them—are spending substantial state dollars on block grants that may be used for prekindergarten as well as other early-childhood priorities identified by local communities.

In all, states are spending more than $1.9 billion annually to help more than 766,000 children attend prekindergarten.

In addition to state-financed prekindergarten efforts, several states have launched programs to increase access to high-quality child care. North Carolina's Smart Start, for example, is spending $210 million during the current fiscal year to reimburse child-care providers, provide subsidies, health care, and family-support services to low-income families, and promote quality. South Carolina's $39 million First Steps initiative and Rhode Island's $67 million Starting Right effort follow a similar model.

In 2000, states also received some $4.5 billion for Head Start from the federal government and served more than 760,000 poor children. That year, 21 states and the District of Columbia supplemented the federal support with $185 million in state funds, according to the National Center for Children in Poverty.

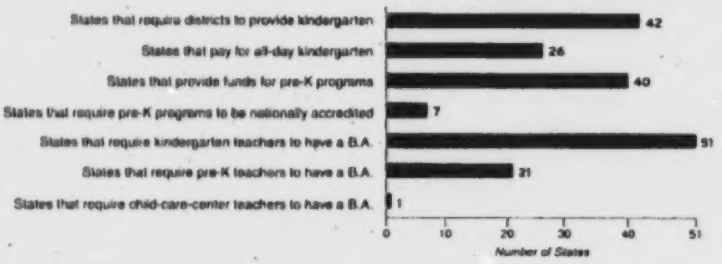
On the child-care front, two new reports—"A Fragile Foundation," by the Children's Defense Fund, and "The Impact of Funding on State Child Care Subsidy Programs," by the Washington-based Center for Law and Social Policy—provide some of the most detailed data available on state child-care policies. The reports include information on how states are using money from the federal Child Care and Development Fund and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families block grants to increase families' access to child care.

In total, states received $4.4 billion in CCDF aid in fiscal 2001. They also transferred an average of 14 percent of their $24 billion TANF allocation in 2000 to the CCDF for child-care purposes.

States' increasing use of federal welfare dollars to help finance child-care options for needy families is striking. While just eight states transferred a percentage of their TANF funds to the CCDF in 1997, 44 states did so in 2000. And while only seven states spent a portion of their TANF money directly on child care in 1997, 35 states did so by 2000.

State Early-Childhood Policies

States have increased their efforts to provide access to early-childhood education for preschool-age children. But those efforts and the quality of programs vary widely. While all states provide some funds for kindergarten, and 41 states and the District of Columbia require that kindergarten be provided, only 25 states and the District pay for all-day kindergarten. Thirty-nine states and the District subsidize pre-K efforts, but just 20 states and the District require pre-K teachers to have the same qualifications as K-12 teachers, and only seven states require pre-K programs to be nationally accredited. Just one state, Rhode Island, requires child-care teachers or providers to obtain the same level of education as K-12 teachers.



Note: The District of Columbia is included in the analysis. Total state count=51.

SOURCE: *Education Week*, 2001; NAEYC, 2001; Dynaski, 2001; NCEDL, 2001; Wheelock College, 2001

Limited Data

But beyond those broad outlines of the "system" of early care and education in the United States, we quickly reach the limits of what we know.

For example, although we know the number of children receiving child-care subsidies each month and the number served through state-supported prekindergarten initiatives, we don't know what proportion of eligible children those figures represent in each state.

We also lack the data to quantify the gap between families' needs for early-childhood education in each state and the existing capacity of prekindergarten and early-childhood-care providers.

What data we do have suggest a mismatch between the supply and demand for child-care services. A study released by the Department of Health and Human Services in 2000 showed that only about 12 percent of the 15 million children eligible for federal child-care subsidies actually received assistance.

According to the Children's Defense Fund, in 19 states, a family of three earning as little as $25,000 in 2000 could not qualify for child-care aid. Seventeen states had waiting lists that year or had frozen the intake of low-income families into their subsidy systems.

We know even less about the situation for prekindergarten programs. While Kentucky guarantees prekindergarten for any needy child whose parents want it, for example, the number of children served in such programs varies widely across the states—from a low of 500 children in Nebraska's Early Childhood Projects to almost 149,000 in Texas's State Pre-K program.

Quality: The Missing Piece

What we know about the quality of the prekindergarten and child-care services that young children re-

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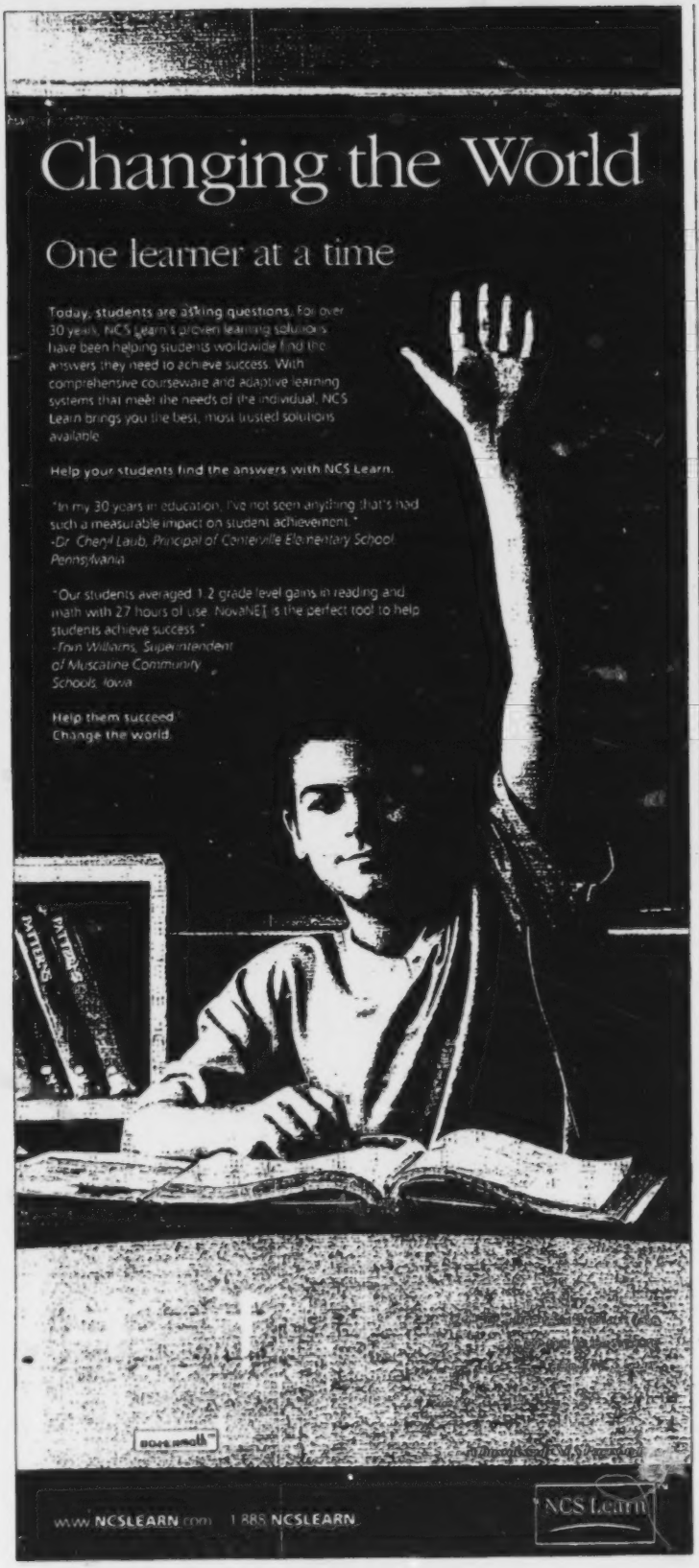
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ceive is even more limited.

The information featured in our tables suggests that, at best, there is great unevenness in the quality of early-childhood settings—especially when the standards and expectations for prekindergarten and child-care providers are stacked up against those for kindergarten.

For example, all 50 states and the District of Columbia require kindergarten teachers to obtain a bachelor's degree to become licensed; and 16 states and the District require kindergarten teachers to take early-childhood courses or to obtain specific early-childhood certification to work with kindergartners.

By comparison, only 20 states and the District of Columbia require prekindergarten teachers to be graduates of four-year colleges. Just one state—Rhode Island—requires teachers in child-care centers to have a bachelor's degree. New Jersey mandates a bachelor's degree for supervisors in child-care centers. In 30 states, adults can begin caring for young children in child-care centers with no prior educational training beyond high school graduation.

In contrast, Head Start's program standards require that by 2003, at least 50 percent of teachers in Head Start centers must have at least an associate's degree. Those teachers who do not have an associate's degree must, at minimum, obtain a Child Development Associate credential, or CDA, which is awarded by the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition.

If pay is any indication, child-care centers have a difficult challenge in attracting and keeping a well-qualified workforce. Low salaries have long been a subject of concern in K-12 education. But the salaries for kindergarten teachers, which averaged $36,770 in 1999, appear generous compared with those for prekindergarten and child-care educators.

Nationwide, child-care workers earned an average of $15,430 in 1999. Self-identified prekindergarten teachers, a category that includes some teachers in child-care centers, fared only slightly better, at $19,610 a year.

Expectations for young children are limited. While almost all states have standards for students in elementary school, only 19 states and the District of Columbia lay out specific expectations for kindergartners. Fifteen states and the District have specific standards for prekindergarten. Five more states are working on such standards. Only six states—California, Connecticut, Georgia, Maryland, Michigan, and Washington—require preschool programs to adhere to the standards.

But no state has included content requirements for child care as part of its licensing system for child-care providers.

Just seven states require that state-subsidized prekindergarten programs meet national accreditation standards to operate. Twenty states have no regulations for the maximum group size of child-care centers, and 18 do not regulate child-care providers who care for up to four children.

To improve quality, 26 states and the District of Columbia have established "tiered" reimbursement systems as part of their child-care subsidies. Under such programs, child-care providers who meet quality criteria specified by the state are eligible for higher subsidies for eligible children than the state normally provides. While some studies suggest such policies are encouraging providers to enhance their child-care offerings, it is unclear how big an impact the policies are having.

The Children's Defense Fund reports that the differential reimbursements range from a low of an additional $11 a month per child in West Virginia to an extra $127 a month per child in New York state.

One thing is clear: With more and more children being cared for outside the home before they reach school age, and mounting evidence about the importance of early-childhood education for later school success, much more needs to be known about this vital time in children's development.

If Americans are serious that quality counts in education, advocates for early-childhood care and learning stress, then quality should be just as important before a child's fifth birthday as after. ■

PHI DELTA KAPPA INTERNATIONAL

The Professional Association in Education

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Since its founding in 1906 Phi Delta Kappa International has been a strong advocate of universal education. Advocacy for the public schools, in particular, is a commitment that is firmly expressed in our constitution. We believe that the public schools are America's best way to meet our national responsibility for the education of all children. But in adopting this forceful advocacy role, we do not diminish the need for strong private and parochial education. Indeed, we encourage involvement in the advocacy initiative by all educators.

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During the coming months, many communities across the nation again will be addressing these important questions. For more information about how to conduct a forum in your local area, interested persons may call Phi Delta Kappa International using the toll-free number: 1-800-766-1156.

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More than ever before, education needs leadership. One way that educators become leaders — whether in the classroom, the administrative office, or the community — is by making a commitment to lifelong learning. Phi Delta Kappa International ensures that educators at all levels have access to many learning opportunities, including workshops, publications, and professional services. For example, each year the PDK Center for Professional Development and Services organizes seminars and workshops in communities across the United States. The Gabbard Institutes provide similar learning opportunities each summer.

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Access to Early-Childhood Programs

STATE	KINDERGARTEN: State requires districts to offer kindergarten (*Education Week*, 2001)	PRESCHOOL/PREKINDERGARTEN: State invests in pre-K program (NCEDL/*Education Week*, 2001)	PRESCHOOL/PREKINDERGARTEN: Name of state-financed pre-K/preschool program	HEAD START: State supplements federal Head Start program (NCCP, 2000)	CHILD CARE: State provides child-care tax credits (National Women's Law Center, 2001)[1]
Alabama	full-day	✔	School Readiness Pilot		
Alaska				✔	n/a
Arizona	half-day	✔	Early Childhood Block Grant		
Arkansas	half-day	✔	Arkansas Better Chance		✔
California	half-day	✔	State Preschool Program		✔
Colorado		✔	Colorado Preschool Program		✔
Connecticut	half-day[1]	✔	School Readiness Program	✔	
Delaware	half-day	✔	Early Childhood Assistance Program		✔
District of Columbia	full-day	✔	Public School Pre-K Program	✔	✔
Florida	half-day	✔	Pre-K Early Intervention Program		n/a
Georgia	full-day	✔	Georgia Pre-K Program	✔	
Hawaii	full-day			✔	✔
Idaho				✔	✔
Illinois	half-day	✔	Early Childhood Block Grant, Preschool Program for At-Risk		
Indiana	half-day				
Iowa	half-day	✔	Shared Visions, Community Empowerment[2]		✔
Kansas	half-day	✔	Four-Year-Olds At-Risk Program	✔	✔
Kentucky	half-day	✔	Kentucky Preschool Program		✔
Louisiana	full-day	✔	Louisiana Quality Education Support Fund, Preschool Block Grant		✔
Maine	half-day	✔	Two-Year Kindergarten Program	✔	✔
Maryland	half-day	✔	Extended Elementary Education Program	✔	✔
Massachusetts	half-day	✔	Community Partnerships for Children	✔	✔
Michigan		✔	Michigan School Readiness Program		
Minnesota	half-day	✔	School Readiness	✔	✔
Mississippi	full-day				
Missouri	half-day	✔	Missouri Preschool Project		
Montana	half-day				✔
Nebraska	half-day	✔	Early Childhood Projects		✔
Nevada	half-day	✔	Comprehensive Prekindergarten Education		n/a
New Hampshire				✔	n/a
New Jersey[1]		✔	Early Childhood Program Aid, Abbott Preschool Program	✔	
New Mexico	half-day	✔	Child Development Program	✔	✔
New York		✔	Universal Pre-Kindergarten, Experimental Pre-K		✔
North Carolina	full-day	✔	More At Four, Smart Start[3]	✔	✔
North Dakota				✔	
Ohio	half-day	✔	Public School Pre-School[4]	✔	✔
Oklahoma	half-day	✔	Early Childhood Program for Four-Year-Olds	✔	✔
Oregon	half-day	✔	Oregon Head Start/Prekindergarten Program		✔
Pennsylvania		✔	Four-Year-Old Kindergarten		
Rhode Island	half-day	✔	Early Childhood Investment Fund, Starting Right[5]	✔	✔
South Carolina	full-day	✔	Child Development Programs for Four-Year-Olds, First Steps[6]		✔
South Dakota	half-day				n/a
Tennessee	half-day	✔	Tennessee Early Childhood Education Pilot Program		n/a
Texas	half-day	✔	Texas State Pre-Kindergarten Program	✔	n/a
Utah	half-day				
Vermont	half-day	✔	Early Education Initiative		✔
Virginia	half-day	✔	Virginia Preschool Initiative		✔
Washington	half-day	✔	Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program	✔	
West Virginia	full-day	✔	Prekindergarten, Educare[7]		
Wisconsin	half-day	✔	Four-Year-Old Kindergarten	✔	
Wyoming	half-day				n/a
U.S.	42	40		22	27

[1] In Connecticut, identified "priority" districts are required to provide full-day kindergarten, and children are required to attend. In New Jersey, full-day kindergarten is mandated for 130 high-poverty districts. [2] In 2001, all preschool efforts in Florida were consolidated into a block grant administered by the Agency for Workforce Innovation. Funding is distributed to county-level early-childhood coalitions that make decisions on their own. It is unclear yet how the new configuration will affect pre-K programs in the state. All data presented here are from before the consolidation. [3] NCEDL did not count Community Empowerment, Smart Start, Starting Right, or Pre-Steps as pre-K programs because the programs are not directly associated with the states' public schools. They are listed here for additional information or because only a small portion of funds support pre-K services. [4] Educare is a new pilot program in West Virginia. Ohio's significant state-financed Head Start program is listed as a Head Start supplement. [5] n/a in this column indicates that state does not have a personal-income tax or taxes only certain nonwage personal income.

EARLY-CHILDHOOD PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY					PARTICIPATION IN EARLY-CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS						
State requires children to attend kindergarten (Education Week, 2001)	Eligibility for pre-K program based on ... (NCEDL, 2001)			Maximum annual income for a family of three to qualify for child-care subsidy (CDF, 2001)	Number of children under 5 (Census, 2000)	Number of children in kindergarten (NCES, 2000)	Number of children in state-financed pre-K program (school year) (Education Week, 2001)		Number of children in Head Start (Head Start Bureau, 2000)	Percent of eligible children receiving federal child-care subsidies in FY 1999 (Child Care Bureau, 2000)	STATE
	age (4-year-olds)	income	risk factors								
		✔		$18,048	295,992	56,120	774	2001-02	15,823	11%	Alabama
				$44,328	47,591	9,583			1,297	13%	Alaska
		✔		$22,908	382,386	67,051	3,600	1999-00	11,882	13%	Arizona
✔		✔	✔	$19,601	181,585	34,218	10,042	2000-01	10,316	6%	Arkansas
		✔		$33,852	2,486,981	459,771	114,459	1999-00	95,280	13%	California
			✔	$25,668	297,505	50,378	9,050	2001-02	9,333	11%	Colorado
		✔		$45,805	223,344	42,193	6,337	2001-02	6,857	5%	Connecticut
✔		✔		$27,768	51,531	7,779	843	2001-02	2,119	12%	Delaware
✔	✔			$27,921	32,536	8,617	4,105	2001-02	3,345	3%	District of Columbia
		✔	✔	$20,820	945,823	174,953	19,601	2000-01	32,389	6%	Florida
	✔			$24,278	595,150	110,359	63,500	2001-02	21,580	8%	Georgia
				$46,035	78,163	14,618			2,916	9%	Hawaii
				$20,472	97,643	17,024			2,387	11%	Idaho
			✔	$24,243	876,549	149,840	55,000	2001-02	37,767	14%	Illinois
				$19,848	423,215	70,438			13,323	7%	Indiana
		✔	✔	$19,432	188,413	34,596	3,613	1999-00	7,235	8%	Iowa
		✔	✔	$25,680	188,708	30,845	3,756	2001-02	7,447	7%	Kansas
✔		✔		$22,208	265,901	46,373	15,892	2000-01	15,701	15%	Kentucky
✔		✔	✔	$29,040	317,392	56,021	2,877	2000-01	20,975	18%	Louisiana
	✔			$34,303	70,726	14,274	844	2000-01	3,631	15%	Maine
✔		✔	✔	$22,463	353,393	56,942	10,980	2000-01	9,968	8%	Maryland
		✔	✔	$27,312	397,268	70,029	21,780	2001-02	12,250	13%	Massachusetts
		✔	✔	$26,064	672,005	128,060	25,309	2001-02	33,769	19%	Michigan
		✔		$38,160	329,594	58,952	43,030	1999-00	9,715	6%	Minnesota
				$27,999	204,364	37,906			25,455	10%	Mississippi
			✔	$17,784	369,898	64,608	6,212	2001-02	16,574	19%	Missouri
				$20,820	54,869	10,335			2,703	11%	Montana
		✔	✔	$25,260	117,048	20,576	500	2001-02	4,571	11%	Nebraska
				$33,576	145,817	25,163	2,000	2001-02	2,035	6%	Nevada*
				$26,376	75,685	9,048			1,425	9%	New Hampshire
		✔		$28,300	563,785	89,520	29,000[2]	2001-02	14,567	10%	New Jersey
✔			✔	$28,300	130,628	22,557	1,600	2001-02	7,135	13%	New Mexico
	✔	✔		$29,644	1,239,417	199,271	72,490	2000-01	46,805	19%	New York
		✔	✔	$32,628	539,509	101,816	1,500	2001-02	17,808	16%	North Carolina
				$29,340	39,400	7,560			2,042	12%	North Dakota
✔		✔		$25,680	754,930	130,141	8,007[3]	1999-00	38,261	10%	Ohio
✔	✔			$29,040	236,353	43,603	23,141	2000-01	12,655	16%	Oklahoma
		✔		$25,680	223,005	37,232	3,698	2001-02	5,771	11%	Oregon
	✔			$28,300	727,804	122,320	2,479	2000-01	29,650	15%	Pennsylvania
✔			✔	$31,230	63,896	11,078	?		2,952	15%	Rhode Island
✔		✔	✔	$17,350	264,679	46,274	16,000	2001-02	11,604	8%	South Carolina
				$22,113	51,069	9,171			2,587	8%	South Dakota
✔		✔	✔	$24,324	374,880	70,814	3,007	2001-02	15,747	18%	Tennessee
		✔	✔	$34,272	1,624,628	290,806	148,888	2000-01	63,171	8%	Texas
				$23,928	209,378	34,963			5,079	10%	Utah
		✔	✔	$31,032	33,989	6,893	1,081	1999-00	1,438	15%	Vermont
✔			✔	$26,172	461,982	83,938	6,044	2001-02	12,652	8%	Virginia
		✔	✔	$31,236	394,306	68,699	6,285	2001-02	10,287	15%	Washington
✔				$20,820	101,805	21,216	5,233	2000-01	7,144	25%	West Virginia*
	✔			$25,680	342,340	58,524	12,612	2000-01	12,953	7%	Wisconsin
				$18,828	30,940	6,133			1,468	11%	Wyoming
14	7	26	21	—	15,175,798	3,397,199	765,089		761,844	12%	U.S.

In Alabama, a pre-K program is targeted based on need. However, any 4-year-old in that community as a whole, in Minnesota, all 4-year-olds are eligible. Priority for services is given to children from low-income families that exceed Head Start income guidelines. [1]Risk factors are locally determined. In Nevada and West Virginia, all eligibility requirements for pre-K are locally determined. [2]Enrollment count for New Jersey is for August data only. [3]Ohio serves an additional 18,765 children in its state-financed Head Start program. *Because pre-K funding is in the form of a block grant and subject to district discretion, investment cannot be determined.

State Funding Levels

STATE	Kindergarten (Education Week, 2001)		State financed pre-K program (Education Week, 2001)			Head Start		Child Care and Development Fund (Child Care Bureau, 2000)	
	State finances full-day kindergarten	State finances half-day or provides partial funds for kindergarten	Total state funds devoted to pre-K program (fiscal year)		Per-child expenditure of state funds on pre-K	Total federal allocation in FY 2000 (Head Start Bureau, 2000)	State supplements to Head Start in FY 2000 (NCCP, 2000)	Total federal allocation of CCDF in FY 2001	State funds required to draw down CCDF match in FY 2001
Alabama	✔		$3,225,000	FY 02	$4,167	$82,414,000		$77,663,187	$15,496,314
Alaska	✔					$9,738,000	$5,700,000	$11,298,338	$8,436,766
Arizona		✔	$10,364,000	FY 00	$2,879	$73,697,000		$87,348,672	$23,480,457
Arkansas	✔		$9,900,000	FY 01	$986	$48,379,000		$42,367,489	$6,435,755
California	✔		$294,920,000	FY 02	$2,677	$643,297,000		$493,696,558	$251,954,307
Colorado		✔	$22,951,000	FY 01	$2,536	$52,226,000		$51,790,028	$28,934,882
Connecticut		✔	$37,276,000	FY 02	$5,882	$41,674,000	$5,100,000	$49,567,252	$34,597,601
Delaware		✔	$4,281,000	FY 02	$5,078	$9,820,000		$12,807,299	$8,661,515
District of Columbia	✔		?		?	$20,926,000	$8,600,000	$9,833,450	$6,501,134
Florida		✔	$62,001,000	FY 01	$3,163	$195,696,000		$212,419,658	$85,508,898
Georgia	✔		$238,000,000	FY 02	$3,748	$126,281,000	$2,100,000	$141,988,921	$48,799,276
Hawaii	✔					$18,199,000	$524,000	$18,549,096	$9,767,685
Idaho		✔				$16,098,000	$1,500,000	$20,202,599	$3,830,292
Illinois		✔	$164,000,000	FY 02	$2,982	$214,965,000		$192,124,005	$117,808,884
Indiana		✔				$72,467,000		$91,806,882	$32,921,054
Iowa		✔	$8,383,000	FY 01	$2,320	$40,714,000		$39,478,642	$12,891,302
Kansas		✔	$8,500,000	FY 02	$2,263	$37,061,000	$2,500,000	$40,453,017	$15,318,969
Kentucky		✔	$47,100,000	FY 02	$2,964	$85,198,000		$70,266,441	$14,841,993
Louisiana	✔		$7,987,000	FY 01	$2,776	$110,318,000		$85,742,307	$14,400,972
Maine	✔		$2,209,000	FY 01	$2,617	$20,378,000	$2,600,000	$15,743,612	$4,419,929
Maryland		✔	$19,000,000	FY 01	$1,730	$61,920,000	$2,500,000	$74,778,024	$48,294,747
Massachusetts	✔		$104,000,000	FY 02	$4,775	$85,917,000	$6,900,000	$100,492,790	$73,101,770
Michigan	✔		$85,500,000	FY 02	$3,378	$186,842,000		$136,818,437	$61,743,968
Minnesota		✔	$10,400,000	FY 02	$242	$56,401,000	$17,400,000	$72,340,004	$42,025,076
Mississippi	✔					$129,843,000		$54,451,523	$5,944,582
Missouri	✔		$14,519,000	FY 02	$2,337	$93,475,000		$87,482,618	$33,134,964
Montana		✔				$15,267,000		$13,418,963	$2,781,372
Nebraska	✔		$1,500,000	FY 02	$3,000	$26,660,000		$29,836,053	$11,835,193
Nevada		✔	$3,500,000	FY 02	$1,750	$12,369,000		$22,264,489	$12,000,422
New Hampshire		✔				$9,838,000	$230,000	$15,217,190	$10,217,949
New Jersey		✔	?		?	$104,743,000	$1,400,000	$103,211,989	$65,061,803
New Mexico	✔		$1,800,000	FY 01	$1,125	$38,374,000	$6,000,000	$36,705,111	$6,179,800
New York	✔		$275,200,000	FY 02	$3,786	$342,136,000		$299,143,634	$187,947,055
North Carolina	✔		$6,450,000	FY 02	$4,300	$104,684,000	$3,900,000	$163,449,703	$80,286,458
North Dakota		✔				$11,973,000	$430,000	$9,798,093	$2,242,592
Ohio		✔	$19,508,000	FY 00	$2,436	$196,884,000	$97,000,000	$189,077,721	$82,193,338
Oklahoma		✔	$56,650,000	FY 02	$2,448	$61,555,000	$3,300,000	$72,244,829	$17,190,209
Oregon		✔	$29,009,000	FY 02	$7,845	$46,071,000		$55,385,953	$21,965,182
Pennsylvania	✔		?		?	$181,844,000		$171,009,977	$92,469,830
Rhode Island		✔	?		?	$17,378,000	$2,000,000	$16,457,979	$9,261,212
South Carolina	✔		$23,800,000	FY 01	$1,488	$64,060,000		$63,892,768	$11,644,114
South Dakota	✔					$14,045,000		$11,237,702	$2,470,406
Tennessee	✔		$6,000,000	FY 02	$1,995	$92,040,000		$104,314,111	$33,375,689
Texas	✔		$267,000,000	FY 00	$1,793	$381,846,000	$7,500,000	$359,454,757	$105,899,432
Utah		✔				$27,840,000		$46,646,650	$9,836,456
Vermont	✔		$1,386,000	FY 01	$1,282	$10,514,000		$9,698,397	$4,177,609
Virginia	✔		$23,500,000	FY 02	$3,888	$74,487,000		$91,576,596	$50,706,381
Washington		✔	$30,082,000	FY 02	$4,848	$78,359,000	$470,000	$102,582,687	$65,695,086
West Virginia	✔		$17,037,000	FY 02	$3,256	$39,842,000		$31,083,417	$5,372,843
Wisconsin	✔		$31,606,000	FY 01	$2,506	$72,177,000	$7,430,000	$78,114,084	$33,290,378
Wyoming		✔				$8,187,000		$8,223,989	$2,775,336
U.S.	26	25	$1,948,542,000		$2,547	$4,546,917,000	$185,084,000	$4,395,497,671	$1,914,028,955

Illinois also spent $15 million on Community Empowerment in FY 2002. North Carolina also spent about $8 million of its $210 million Smart Start FY 2001 expenditure on pre-K. South Carolina spent $38 million on Pre-Steps in FY 2001. Rhode Island spent $87 million on Starting Right in FY 2001. West Virginia spent $1 million on Educare in FY 2001. See state policy updates for details on these programs. ? Unable to calculate because pre-K spending cannot be separated from block grant or K-12 state funding. In the case of Rhode Island, the state had a one-time $8.2 million in FY 2001 for the Early Childhood Investment Fund. However, because of local discretion in spending, the state is unable to determine pre-K spending.

STATE FUNDING LEVELS				COSTS TO FAMILIES			
Temporary Assistance to Needy Families			Tax Credits				
Total federal allocation of TANF in FY 2000 (Office of Family Assistance, 2000)	Percent of FY 2000 TANF funds state transferred to CCDF (CLASP, 2000)	Amount of TANF funds spent directly on child care by state (CLASP, 2000)	Maximum child- and dependent-care tax credit for families with one dependent in 2001[1] (National Women's Law Center, 2001)	Monthly fee for family of three at 100% poverty and one child in care in 2000 (CDF, 2001)	Monthly fee for family of three at 150% poverty and one child in care in 2000 (CDF, 2001)	Monthly reimbursement at least 75th percentile of market rates in 2000 (CDF, 2001)	STATE
$157,618,613	17%	$1,900,000		$65	$184	✔	Alabama
$84,409,304	20%	$7,600,000	n/a	$14	$71	✔	Alaska
$349,746,683	20%	$27,300,000		$66	$152		Arizona
$146,554,439	8%	$5,500,000	$144	$133	not eligible	✔	Arkansas
$5,022,359,727	14%	$539,700,000	$454	$0	$0	✔	California
$223,216,294	20%	$1,300,000	$504	$96	$180		Colorado
$269,164,911	0%	$21,200,000		$47	$106		Connecticut
$36,852,696	14%		$360	$78	$172		Delaware
$182,715,908	16%	$12,400,000	$230	$30	$162		District of Columbia
$1,006,999,542	19%	$132,200,000	n/a	$69	$121	✔	Florida
$494,147,526	14%	$1,000,000		$56	$139		Georgia
$105,209,493	1%		$600	$0	$38		Hawaii
$66,927,446	20%	$2,700,000	$197	$65	not eligible	✔	Idaho
$626,628,889	20%	$23,000,000		$65	$134		Illinois
$415,073,780	19%	$111,100,000		$22	$152	✔	Indiana
$195,732,899	20%	$2,000	$540	$22	not eligible	✔	Iowa
$101,931,061	15%		$180	$58	$177		Kansas
$191,408,286	20%	$14,500,000	$144	$98	$152	✔	Kentucky
$292,569,090	30%	$100,000	$720	$49	$114	✔	Louisiana
$78,120,689	9%	$3,400,000	$360	$71	$159	✔	Maine
$328,390,400	20%	$28,900,000	$234	$90	$234	✔	Maryland
$469,933,339	20%	$104,700,000	$202	$78	$173		Massachusetts
$1,033,035,638	1%	$151,200,000		$24	$24		Michigan
$540,069,522	6%		$720	$5	$48	✔	Minnesota
$187,974,283	20%	$6,100,000		$47	$105	✔	Mississippi
$307,073,680	10%			$43	not eligible		Missouri
$69,534,499	17%		$168	$47	not eligible	✔	Montana
$86,808,461	7%		$720	$18	$129		Nebraska
$73,748,260	0%	$600,000	n/a	$108	$303	✔	Nevada
$55,050,254	0%		n/a	$1	$2		New Hampshire
$521,360,267	20%			$71	$133		New Jersey
$189,534,836	15%		$480	$48	$110		New Mexico
$3,510,116,577	18%		$792	$4	$191	✔	New York
$523,879,599	20%	$15,400,000	$312	$106	$159		North Carolina
$41,360,569	2%	$1,800,000		$180	$280	✔	North Dakota
$1,465,692,248	11%	$79,000,000	$720	$28	$93	✔	Ohio
$212,366,539	20%	$21,200,000	$144	$44	$139		Oklahoma
$180,582,480	0%	$15,800,000	$720	$82	$206		Oregon
$1,043,558,908	9%	$13,900,000		$65	$152	✔	Pennsylvania
$104,043,207	4%		$184	$0	$74	✔	Rhode Island
$133,244,412	1%		$168	$30	$48	✔	South Carolina
$36,151,479	20%		n/a	$0	$340	✔	South Dakota
$362,764,079	24%	$7,800,000	n/a	$39	$113		Tennessee
$717,207,316	7%		n/a	$106	$159	✔	Texas
$117,258,513	0%	$1,200,000		$36	$255	✔	Utah
$55,891,204	16%	$2,700,000	$173	$0	$123		Vermont
$174,063,151	17%		$138	$118	$177		Virginia
$612,283,947	24%	$4,200,000	n/a	$20	$98		Washington
$257,478,183	0%	$6,700,000		$49	not eligible	✔	West Virginia
$638,231,617	20%	$90,500,000		$74	$165	✔	Wisconsin
$56,889,841	0%		n/a	$11	not eligible	✔	Wyoming
$24,182,964,924	14%	$1,455,802,000	—	—	—	28	U.S.

[1]n/a indicates that state does not have a personal-income tax or taxes only certain nonwage personal income.

Program Standards

STATE	CONTENT/CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS: State has standards for kindergarten year (Education Week, 2001)	CONTENT/CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS: State has standards specific to pre-K (Erikson Institute/Education Week, 2001)	CONTENT/CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS: State requires pre-K programs to use standards (Erikson Institute/Education Week, 2001)	CONTENT/CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS: Head Start programs have standards (Head Start Bureau, 2001)	COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES: State-financed pre-K requires (Gilliam, 2000/Education Week, 2001): meals	COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES: health screening/referrals	COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES: family case-workers/home visits	STAFFING REQUIREMENTS: Minimum teacher/child ratios: Kindergarten (Education Week, 2001)	Pre-K (NCEDL, 2001)	Head Start for 4-year-olds (Head Start Bureau, 2001)	Child-care centers (Children's Foundation, 2001): Age 3	Age 4	Age 5
Alabama	✔			✔	✔	✔		1:18	2:18	2:20	1:12	1:20	1:20
Alaska	ages 5-7			✔				NR		2:20	1:10	1:10	1:15
Arizona	✔			✔				NR	NR	2:20	1:13	1:15	1:20
Arkansas	K-4	✔		✔	✔	✔		1:20	1:10	2:20	1:12	1:15	1:18
California	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔		1:33	1:8	2:20	1:12	1:12	1:14
Colorado	K-4	✔		✔				NR	1:8	2:20	1:10	1:12	1:15
Connecticut	K-4	✔	✔	✔		✔		NR	1:10	2:20	1:10	1:10	1:10
Delaware	K-3			✔	✔	✔	✔	1:40	1:10	2:20	1:12	1:15	1:25
District of Columbia	✔	✔		✔				1:15	1:20	2:20	1:8	1:10	1:15
Florida	✔	✔		✔	✔	✔		NR	1:10	2:20	1:15	1:20	1:25
Georgia	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	2:24	1:10	2:20	1:15	1:18	1:20
Hawaii	K-1			✔				1:20		2:20	1:12	1:16	1:20
Idaho	✔			✔				NR		2:20	1:12	1:12	1:12
Illinois	early elementary	✔		✔		✔		NR	1:10	2:20	1:10	1:10	1:20
Indiana	✔			✔				NR		2:20	1:10	1:12	1:15
Iowa				✔	✔	✔	✔	NR	1:8	2:20	1:8	1:12	1:15
Kansas	K-2/K-3			✔	✔	✔	✔	NR	NR	2:20	1:12	1:12	1:14
Kentucky	Gr. 4 benchmark			✔	✔	✔	✔	2:24	1:10	2:20	1:12	1:14	1:15
Louisiana	K-4	under development		✔				1:26	2:20	2:20	1:14	1:16	1:20
Maine	Pre-K-2	Pre-K-2		✔		✔	✔	1:25	NR	2:20	1:10	1:10	1:10
Maryland	K-3	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	NR	1:10	2:20	1:10	1:10	1:15
Massachusetts	K-2	under development		✔		✔		NR	2:15*	2:20	1:12	1:12	1:15
Michigan	early elementary	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	NR	1:8	2:20	1:10	1:12	1:12
Minnesota	K-3	✔		✔	✔	✔	✔	NR	1:10	2:20	1:10	1:10	1:15
Mississippi	✔			✔				1:22		2:20	1:14	1:16	1:20
Missouri	K-4	under development		✔	✔	✔	✔	NR	1:15	2:20	1:10	1:10	1:16
Montana	Gr. 4 benchmark			✔				1:20		2:20	1:10	1:10	1:14
Nebraska	K-1			✔	✔	✔	✔	NR	1:10	2:20	1:10	1:12	1:15
Nevada	✔			✔				NR	NR	2:20	2:20*	2:20*	2:20*
New Hampshire	K-3			✔				NR		2:20	1:8	1:12	1:15
New Jersey	K-4	✔		✔	✔	✔	✔	1:25	2:15	2:20	1:10	1:12	1:15
New Mexico	✔			✔		✔		1:15		2:20	1:12	1:12	1:15
New York	K-4			✔	✔	✔	✔	NR	2:18	2:20	1:7	1:8	1:9
North Carolina	✔			✔	✔	✔		2:23	1:9	2:20	1:15	1:20	1:25
North Dakota	Gr. 4 benchmark			✔				1:25		2:20	1:7	1:10	1:12
Ohio	✔	✔		✔	✔	✔	✔	1:25	2:17	2:20	1:14	1:14	1:20
Oklahoma	✔	✔		✔	✔	✔	✔	1:20	1:10	2:20	1:12	1:15	1:15
Oregon	Gr. 3 benchmark			✔	✔	✔	✔	NR	2:20	2:20	1:10	1:10	1:15
Pennsylvania	Gr. 3 benchmark			✔				NR	NR	2:20	1:10	1:10	1:12
Rhode Island	K-4	under development		✔				NR	1:20	2:20	1:9	1:10	1:12
South Carolina	✔			✔	✔	✔	✔	2:30	2:20	2:20	1:13	1:18	1:21
South Dakota	✔			✔				NR		2:20	1:10	1:10	1:10
Tennessee	Gr. 3 benchmark	under development		✔	✔	✔	✔	1:25	1:10	2:20	1:9	1:15	1:20
Texas	✔	✔		✔		✔		1:22	NR	2:20	1:17	1:20	1:24
Utah	✔			✔				NR		2:20	1:12	1:15	1:20
Vermont	Pre-K-4	Pre-K-4		✔	✔	✔	✔	1:20	1:10	2:20	1:10	1:10	1:13
Virginia	✔			✔			✔	1:25	1:8	2:20	1:10	1:12	1:20
Washington	Gr. 4 benchmark	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	NR	1:6	2:20	1:10	1:10	1:15
West Virginia	✔			✔				NR	NR	2:20	1:10	1:12	1:15
Wisconsin	Gr. 4 benchmark			✔	✔	✔		NR	NR	2:20	1:10	1:13	1:17
Wyoming	Gr. 4 benchmark			✔				NR		2:20	1:10	1:15	1:20
U.S.	20	16	6	51	25	31	21	—	—	—	—	—	—

*Ratio refers to school settings. Ratio is 2:18 in Head Start or child-care centers.
In Nevada, teacher-child ratios in centers vary by size of center from 1:8 for up to six children to 7 teachers for up to 93 children, and one additional teacher for every 13 children.
NR=not regulated or unspecified.

STAFFING REQUIREMENTS: Maximum group size: Kindergarten (Education Week, 2001)	Pre-K (CCF, 1999)	Head Start for 4-year-olds (Head Start Bureau, 2001)	Child-care centers (NRCCSC, 2001): Age 3	Age 4	Age 5	Number of children allowed in a regulated ... (Children's Foundation, 2001): Family/day care home	Large day care home	# of children who can be cared for in a home without regulation (Children's Foundation, 2001)	EXEMPTIONS FROM REGULATION: State allows exemption from licensing for ... (Children's Foundation, 2001): nursery schools, preschools, or pre-K	religious centers	ACCREDITATION: State requires NAEYC accreditation for pre-K programs (NAEYC, 2001)	State pays higher reimbursement rates for quality child care (CCF/NAEYC/ Education Week, 2001)	STATE
18	NR	20	12	20	20	1-6	7-12	0		✔			Alabama
NR		20	NR	NR	NR	5-8	9-12	4[1]		✔			Alaska
NR	NR	20	NR	NR	NR	1-4	5-15	4[1]			✔	✔	Arizona
22	20	20	NR	NR	NR	1-5	6-16	5			✔		Arkansas
33	NR	20	NR	NR	NR	1-6	7-14	children from one other family					California
NR	15	20	20	24	30	2-6	7-12	2					Colorado
NR	20	20	20	20	20	1-6	7-12	0			✔	✔	Connecticut
22	20	20	NR	NR	NR	1-6	7-12	0					Delaware
NR	NR	20	16	20	25	1-5	no classification	0				✔	District of Columbia
NR	NR	20	NR	NR	NR	1-5	6-12	children from one other family		✔		✔	Florida
24	20	20	30	36	40	3-6	7-18	2		✔		✔	Georgia
20		20	NR	NR	NR	3-6	7-12	2				✔	Hawaii
NR		20	NR	NR	NR	1-6	7-12	6					Idaho
NR	20	20	20	20	20	4-8	3-16	3	✔	✔			Illinois
NR		20	NR	NR	NR	NR	6-16	5[1]		✔			Indiana
NR	16	20	NR	NR	NR	1-6	7-11	6	✔	✔	✔		Iowa
NR	NR	20	24	24	28	1-6	7-10	0					Kansas
24	20	20	24	28	30	4-6	7-12	3				✔	Kentucky
NR	NR	20	13	15	NR	1-6	no classification	6[1]				✔	Louisiana
NR	NR	20	30	30	30	3-12	no classification	2				✔	Maine
NR	20	20	20	20	30	1-8	no classification	0	✔			✔	Maryland
NR	15	20	20	20	30	1-6	7-10	0			✔		Massachusetts
NR	18	20	NR	NR	NR	1-6	7-12	0					Michigan
17	20	20	20	20	20	1-10	10-14	0				✔	Minnesota
27		20	14	20	20	1-5	6-12	5				✔	Mississippi
NR	20	20	NR	NR	NR	5-10	11-20	4		✔	✔	✔	Missouri
24		20	NR	NR	NR	3-6	7-12	2	✔				Montana
NR	20	20	NR	NR	NR	4-8	9-12	3	✔		✔	✔	Nebraska
NR	NR	20	NR	NR	NR	5-6	7-12	4	✔			✔	Nevada
NR		20	24	24	30	4-6	7-12	3					New Hampshire
21[1]	25	20	20	20	20	1-5	no classification	5				✔	New Jersey
20	NR	20	NR	NR	NR	5-6	7-12	4		✔		✔	New Mexico
NR	20	20	16	21	24	3-6	7-12	2					New York
NR	18	20	25	25	25	3-5	no classification	2				✔	North Carolina
25		20	14	20	24	6-7	8-18	5					North Dakota
NR	20	20	24	28	28	1-6	7-12	6	✔			✔	Ohio
20	20	20	24	30	30	1-7	8-12	0				✔	Oklahoma
NR	20	20	20	20	30	4-6	7-12	3	✔			✔	Oregon
NR	NR	20	20	20	20	4-6	7-12	3	✔				Pennsylvania
NR	NR	20	18	20	24	4-8	9-12	3	✔				Rhode Island
NR	20	20	NR	NR	NR	1-6	7-12	0	✔	✔		✔	South Carolina
NR		20	20	20	20	1-12	13-20	12[1]					South Dakota
25	20	20	20	20	20	5-7	8-12	4					Tennessee
NR	NR	20	34	35	35	4-6	7-12	3				✔	Texas
NR		20	24	30	35	5-8	9-12	4	✔	✔		✔	Utah
20	18	20	20	20	20	1-6	9-12	children from two other families[2]				✔	Vermont
30	16	20	NR	NR	NR	1-6	6-12	5		✔			Virginia
NR	24	20	20	20	30	1-12	no classification	0					Washington
23	NR	20	NR	NR	NR	1-6	7-12	3	✔	✔		✔	West Virginia
NR	NR	20	20	20	24	1-3	no classification	3[1]				✔	Wisconsin
NR		20	NR	NR	NR	3-6	7-10	2					Wyoming
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	13	13	7	27	U.S.

[1]Applies to Abbott districts only. [2]Maximum number only applies if children are not receiving public funds or other subsidies that carry regulations. In Alabama, if the center receives state or federal funds, it is not exempt. In Indiana, if the provider receives federal CCDF funds, it is not exempt. Georgia has a pilot tiered reimbursement program.

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Teacher Quality

	PRESERVICE REQUIREMENTS						EFFORTS TO IMPROVE TEACHER/PROVIDER QUALIFICATIONS	
	Kindergarten teachers (Trygstad, 2000)		Pre-K teachers (NCEDL, 2000)	Head Start (Head Start Bureau, 2000)	Child care providers (Whitebook & Colburn, 2000)		Compensation programs (Hitchens/Education Week, 2000)	
STATE	Minimum degree requirement	State requires courses or certification in early childhood[1]	Minimum degree requirement[2]	Minimum degree requirement[3]	Education requirements for child-care providers	State has higher education requirements for master teachers/supervisors	State has compensation programs for child-care providers	Funding for compensation initiatives for FY 2000
Alabama	BA	✔	AA in early childhood or related field	CDA	12 hours of child-care training within 30 days	No		
Alaska	BA			CDA	None	No		
Arizona	BA		CDA	CDA	None	No		
Arkansas	BA		BA in early childhood	CDA	None	No		
California	BA		24 credits in early childhood	CDA	6 postsecondary units in early childhood	CDA	✔	$15,000,000
Colorado	BA		CDA	CDA	None	No		
Connecticut	BA	✔	CDA	CDA	None	CDA		
Delaware	BA	✔	CDA	CDA	60 hours in early childhood	No		
District of Columbia	BA	✔	BA	CDA	CDA	No		
Florida	BA		CDA	CDA	40 hours in early childhood	No		
Georgia	BA		AA in child development	CDA	10 hours of child-care training in first year	No	✔	$4,000,000
Hawaii	BA			CDA	CDA	No		
Idaho	BA			CDA	None	No		
Illinois	BA		BA in early childhood	CDA	CDA or CCP	No	✔	$3,000,000
Indiana	BA			CDA	None[4]	No		
Iowa	BA	✔	CDA[5]	CDA	None	No		
Kansas	BA		BA in early childhood	CDA	CDA	No	✔	(FY 01) $1,000,000
Kentucky	BA	✔	CDA[6]	CDA	None	No		
Louisiana	BA	✔	BA	CDA	None	No		
Maine	BA		BA	CDA	None	No		
Maryland	BA	✔	BA in early childhood	CDA	30 hours in early-childhood development	No		
Massachusetts	BA	✔	CDA[7]	CDA	3 credit course in child development	6 courses in early childhood		
Michigan	BA		BA	CDA	None	No		
Minnesota	BA		BA	CDA	CDA	No		
Mississippi	BA			CDA	None	No		
Missouri	BA	✔	CDA	CDA	None	No		
Montana	BA			CDA	6 hours of child-care training in first year	No		
Nebraska	BA		BA	CDA	None	No		
Nevada	BA	✔	BA	CDA	6 hours of child-care training within 6 months	No		
New Hampshire	BA			CDA	3 year vocational child-care course	CDA		
New Jersey	BA		BA	CDA	CCP	BA and 6 credits in early childhood		
New Mexico	BA			CDA	None	No		
New York	BA		BA	CDA	None	CDA	✔	$40,000,000
North Carolina	BA	✔	AA in early childhood	CDA	None	NC Early Childhood Credential	✔	$6,300,000
North Dakota	BA			CDA	None	No		
Ohio	BA	✔	AA by 2008	CDA	None	No		
Oklahoma	BA		BA in early childhood	CDA	None	No	✔	$1,600,000
Oregon	BA		CDA	CDA	None	No		
Pennsylvania	BA		BA in early childhood	CDA	None	AA with 30 credits in early childhood		
Rhode Island	BA	✔	BA in early childhood	CDA	BA and state early childhood certification	No		
South Carolina	BA		BA in early childhood	CDA	None	No		
South Dakota	BA			CDA	None	No		
Tennessee	BA		BA in early childhood	CDA	None	No		
Texas	BA		BA in early childhood	CDA	8 hours of child-care training	No		
Utah	BA	✔		CDA	None	No		
Vermont	BA		CDA[8]	CDA	12 credits in early childhood	BA in early childhood		
Virginia	BA	✔	CDA	CDA	None	12 hours of child-care training in first month		
Washington	BA		AA in early childhood or child development	CDA	20 hours of approved training	No	✔	$2,000,000
West Virginia	BA		BA	CDA	None	No		
Wisconsin	BA	✔	BA	CDA	3 courses in early childhood	No	✔	$1,750,000
Wyoming	BA			CDA	None	No		
U.S.	—	17	—	—	—	—	9	$74,650,000

NOTE: BA=Bachelor's degree. AA=Associate's degree. [1]Elementary education courses not counted. States get credit if kindergarten teachers must take early-childhood or early-development courses, or obtain certification for birth-K. [2]CDA=Child Development Associate credential awarded by the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition. CCP=Certified Child Care Professional credential awarded by the National Child Care Association. Data were not collected for states that do not have a state-financed pre-K program. [3]In public school settings, pre-K teachers must have a BA in early childhood. In child-care settings a CDA is the minimum requirement. [4]Beginning in fall 2002, Kentucky pre-K teachers must obtain a BA with birth-K certification. [5]By 2003, at least 50 percent of teachers in Head Start centers will be required to have at least an associate's degree. [6]As of July 2001, child-care providers in Indiana must begin work on a CDA and obtain it within three years.

EFFORTS TO IMPROVE TEACHER/PROVIDER QUALIFICATIONS: TEACH scholarship program for child-care providers (TEACH Early Childhood Project, 2001)			AVERAGE ANNUAL SALARIES FOR TEACHERS AND PROVIDERS				
State has TEACH program	State funding for TEACH in 2000-01	Number of scholarships provided by state in 2000-01	Kindergarten teachers, except special education (BLS, 1999)	Preschool teachers, except special education (BLS, 1999)	Head Start teachers (Head Start Bureau, 2000)	Child-care workers (BLS, 1999)	STATE
			$32,400	$15,140	$15,261	$13,840	Alabama
			$40,690	$23,380	$20,448	$17,970	Alaska
			$35,370	$16,420	$19,344	$14,380	Arizona
			$31,470	$16,600	$16,337	$13,150	Arkansas
			$41,490	$21,130	$22,504	$17,420	California
✔	$230,197	197	$35,480	$18,780	$18,594	$15,060	Colorado
			$46,100	$22,990	$23,558	$17,710	Connecticut
			n/a[2]	$18,230	$16,560	$15,060	Delaware
			$38,770	$25,570	$26,785	$22,090	District of Columbia
✔	$4,600,000	2,094	$34,230	$17,270	$19,353	$14,460	Florida
✔	$193,559	141	$35,090	$20,060	$18,126	$13,950	Georgia
✔	$245,000[1]	70[1]	$29,920	$21,680	$26,682	$14,500	Hawaii
✔	$115,091	64	$23,590	$16,430	$15,551	$13,520	Idaho
✔	$1,111,137	729	$36,380	$20,080	$20,563	$18,210	Illinois
✔	$1,154,243	1,329	$40,430	$17,760	$18,139	$14,780	Indiana
			$29,370	$16,980	$18,684	$14,100	Iowa
✔	$176,768	154	$29,820	$18,920	$20,013	$14,310	Kansas
			$33,930	$18,470	$17,786	$13,490	Kentucky
			$34,950	$17,880	$16,052	$13,280	Louisiana
			$34,140	$18,650	$16,968	$16,230	Maine
			$38,510	$23,500	$21,445	$16,570	Maryland
			$40,110	$23,650	$19,755	$18,640	Massachusetts
✔	$2,693,756	750	$39,200	$23,370	$24,296	$16,090	Michigan
			$38,600	$23,750	$19,584	$15,770	Minnesota
			$26,520	$16,600	$16,401	$12,870	Mississippi
✔	$159,000	50	$31,570	$17,740	$17,956	$14,610	Missouri
			$29,310	$19,150	$14,648	$13,180	Montana
2003	$350,000[1]		$30,170	$17,330	$17,024	$13,880	Nebraska
			n/a[2]	$18,260	$18,364	$14,710	Nevada
			$25,990	$19,420	$17,976	$15,900	New Hampshire
			$45,110	$22,080	$23,374	$16,320	New Jersey
			$33,720	$16,680	$17,393	$13,730	New Mexico
✔	$94,600	39	$44,930	$22,070	$25,437	$17,400	New York
✔	$2,697,256	4,962	$32,650	$17,670	$17,416	$14,460	North Carolina
			$25,420	$16,670	$20,248	$13,450	North Dakota
			$37,400	$18,500	$18,199	$15,370	Ohio
✔	$947,433	1,576	$27,810	$15,710	$16,038	$13,690	Oklahoma
			$36,690	$18,990	$20,770	$15,470	Oregon
✔	$1,284,612	744	$39,610	$19,090	$19,262	$15,710	Pennsylvania
			$42,040	$22,720	$20,122	$16,820	Rhode Island
✔	$101,600	663	$33,540	$19,360	$14,177	$13,460	South Carolina
			$28,330	$20,140	$17,825	$14,480	South Dakota
			$31,750	$15,380	$17,507	$13,410	Tennessee
			$34,510	$17,520	$20,128	$13,820	Texas
			$33,490	$17,810	$15,544	$14,910	Utah
			$34,660	$22,260	$19,129	$15,670	Vermont
✔	$122,437	38	$33,090	$19,190	$21,475	$14,640	Virginia
✔	$308,815	90	$35,960	$20,370	$21,358	$16,350	Washington
			$34,620	$18,850	$18,202	$13,400	West Virginia
✔	$1,845,000	612	$35,460	$18,840	$22,414	$15,290	Wisconsin
			$30,800	$19,270	$15,789	$13,200	Wyoming
18	$17,829,904	14,302	$36,770	$19,610	$19,148	$15,430	U.S.

[1]Funding and scholarship figures are projections for 2001-02.
[2]Estimates for Delaware and Nevada are not available.

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School Readiness and Assessment

STATE	TESTING/SCREENING: State requires diagnostic testing for kindergartners (NCEDL/Education Week, 2001)	TESTING/SCREENING: State requires testing for kindergartners to gauge school readiness statewide (Education Week, 2001)	TESTING/SCREENING: State pre-K program requires diagnostic/developmental testing (Erikson Institute, 2001)	TRANSITION SERVICES: Transition efforts required through state-financed pre-K or Head Start program (NCCP, 2000)
Alabama	✔			
Alaska	✔	✔		
Arizona				
Arkansas	✔			✔
California				
Colorado			✔	
Connecticut			✔	✔
Delaware			✔	✔
District of Columbia			✔	✔
Florida				
Georgia	✔			✔
Hawaii				
Idaho	✔			
Illinois			✔	✔
Indiana				
Iowa	✔			
Kansas			✔	
Kentucky				
Louisiana	✔	✔	✔	
Maine				
Maryland	✔	✔	✔	✔
Massachusetts				
Michigan				✔
Minnesota	✔			
Mississippi				
Missouri		✔	✔	
Montana				
Nebraska			✔	
Nevada				
New Hampshire				
New Jersey				✔
New Mexico	✔[2]	✔	✔	
New York				✔
North Carolina	✔			
North Dakota				
Ohio	✔	✔	✔	
Oklahoma	✔			
Oregon			✔	✔
Pennsylvania				
Rhode Island				
South Carolina	✔		✔	
South Dakota				
Tennessee	✔			
Texas	✔			
Utah	✔			
Vermont			✔	
Virginia[3]				
Washington			✔	
West Virginia				
Wisconsin				
Wyoming				
U.S.	17	6	16	11

[1] Alabama administers the Early Learning Inventory to every public school kindergartner. However, the inventory will not be administered in 2001-02.
[2] New Mexico requires assessment of full-day kindergartners only.
[3] Virginia does not require districts to administer the Early Reading Intervention assessment to kindergartners, but most districts do.

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Sources and Notes

ACCESS TO EARLY-CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

State requires districts to offer kindergarten: *Education Week* annual state policy survey, 2001. "Full day" indicates that state requires districts to provide kindergarten for the full length of the school day. "Half day" indicates that state requires at least half-day kindergarten but may leave half- or full-day option up to district discretion.

State invests in pre-K program: "Public School Pre-K Programs: National Survey of States," Richard M. Clifford, National Center for Early Development and Learning, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2001. Data collected on state-financed prekindergarten programs in 2000. *Education Week* used the NCEDL's definition of state pre-K programs, which requires that the program be administered through the state department of education or that schools or districts be potential grantees for pre-K funds. *Education Week* supplemented the data for several states for which the NCEDL was unable to collect information: Missouri, New Mexico, and Rhode Island, plus the District of Columbia. *Education Week* gave credit for pre-K programs to three states that the NCEDL did not. Nevada was given credit because of a new effort to expand pre-K programs in fiscal years 2002 and 2003. North Carolina was given credit for its new More At Four pre-K program, and Pennsylvania was given credit because its school funding formula provides money to schools that enroll prekindergartners.

Name of state-financed pre-K/preschool program: Ibid.

State supplements federal Head Start program: "Map and Track: State Initiatives for Young Children and Families," National Center for Children in Poverty, 2000.

State provides child-care tax credits: "Recent Changes in State Child and Dependent Care Tax Provisions: Tax Year 2001," National Women's Law Center, January 2001.

State requires children to attend kindergarten: *Education Week* annual state policy survey, 2001.

Eligibility for pre-K program: "Public School Pre-K Programs: National Survey of States," NCEDL, 2001. *Education Week* supplemented NCEDL data for the states listed above.

Maximum annual income for a family of three to qualify for child-care subsidy: "A Fragile Foundation: State Child Care Assistance Policies," Children's Defense Fund, 2001.

Number of children under 5: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1.

Number of children in kindergarten: "Public School Student, Staff, and Graduate Counts by State, School Year 1999-2000," National Center for Education Statistics, 2000.

Number of children in state-financed pre-K program: *Education Week* contacts with state early-childhood specialists, fall 2001. Unless otherwise noted, the enrollment figures are for the 2001-02 school year. Where no more recent figure could be obtained, enrollment figures are for the 1999-2000 school year, from "Public School Pre-K Programs: National Survey of States," NCEDL, 2001.

Number of children in Head Start: Head Start Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2000.

Percent of eligible children receiving federal child-care subsidies in FY 1999: Child Care Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1999.

FUNDING LEVELS

State finances full-day kindergarten: *Education Week* annual state policy survey, 2001. This includes states that pay for all-day kindergarten for all districts or schools or all those that choose to provide it.

State finances half-day kindergarten or provides partial funds for kindergarten: Ibid.

Total state funds devoted to pre-K program (fiscal year): *Education Week* contacts with state early-childhood specialists, fall 2001. Funding data are provided for the most recent fiscal year available. The fiscal year is noted next to each funding figure. Note that the state funding may not reflect the total actual cost of the program. We collected information on the state share of funding.

Per-child expenditure of state funds on pre-K: Calculated by *Education Week* by dividing total state funding for pre-K by the number of children enrolled in the pre-K program. Note that these figures do not necessarily reflect the total per-pupil cost of the programs. Also, these estimates are based on the most recent available data on enrollment and funding, which may, in some cases, cover different fiscal and school years.

Total federal Head Start allocation in FY 2000: Head Start Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2000.

State supplements to Head Start in FY 2000: "Map and Track: State Initiatives for Young Children and Families," NCCP, 2000.

Total federal allocation of CCDF (Child Care and Development Fund) in FY 2001: Child Care Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001. The CCDF block grant is the main source of federal funding for child-care assistance for low-income families. Totals include the federal portion of mandatory, discretionary, and matching funds.

State funds required to draw down CCDF match in FY 2001: Ibid. This figure reflects both the state maintenance-of-effort required and the state share of matching funds required for states to receive their full federal allocation.

Total federal allocation of TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) in FY 2000: Office of Family Assistance, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001.

Percent of FY 2000 TANF funds state transferred to CCDF: "The Impact of TANF Funding on State Child Care Subsidy Programs," Center for Law and Social Policy, 2001. Under federal law, in a given fiscal year, states may transfer up to 30 percent of their TANF, or welfare-reduction, funds to CCDF.

Amount of TANF funds spent directly on child care by state: Ibid. In addition to transferring TANF funds to the child-care block grant, states have the option of spending TANF dollars directly on child care for unemployed families.

Maximum child- and dependent-care tax credit for families with one dependent in 2001: "Recent Changes in State Child and Dependent Care Tax Provisions: Tax Year 2001," NWLC, January 2001.

Monthly fee for family of three at 100% poverty (earning $14,196 per year) and one child in care in 2000: "A Fragile Foundation: State Child Care Assistance Policies," CDF, 2001.

Monthly fee for family of three at 150% poverty (earning $21,225 per year) and one child in care in 2000: Ibid.

Monthly reimbursement at least 75th percentile of current market rates for care in 2000: Ibid.

PROGRAM STANDARDS

State has standards for the kindergarten year: *Education Week* annual state policy survey, 2001.

State has standards specific to pre-K: Unpublished data from the Erikson Institute for Advanced Study of Child Development, Carol Hurtin, "Child Assessment at the Preprimary Level," Erikson Institute Occasional Paper, forthcoming 2002.

State requires pre-K programs to use standards: Ibid. State pre-K programs are required to use state content/curriculum standards.

Head Start programs have standards: Head Start Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001.

State-financed pre-K requires services (including meals): Walter S. Gilliam, Yale University Child Study Center, 2000. *Education Week* supplemented these data with information on states not credited with state-subsidized pre-K programs by Gilliam.

State-financed pre-K requires services including health screening or referrals: Ibid.

State-financed pre-K requires services including family caseworkers or home visits: Ibid.

Minimum teacher/child ratios for kindergarten: *Education Week* annual state policy survey, 2001.

Minimum teacher/child ratios for pre-K: "Public School Pre-K Programs: National Survey of States," NCEDL, 2001. Data collected on state-financed pre-K programs in 2000.

Minimum teacher/child ratios for Head Start for 4-year-olds: Head Start Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001.

Minimum teacher/child ratios for child-care centers: Children's Foundation, 2001.

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Maximum group size for pre-K: "Seeds of Success: State Prekindergarten Initiatives, 1998-1999," CDF, 1999.

Maximum group size for Head Start for 4-year-olds: Head Start Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001.

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Maximum number of children in a regulated family day-care home: Children's Foundation, 2001.

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State allows exemption from licensing for nursery schools, preschools, and prekindergarten or religious centers: Ibid.

State requires NAEYC accreditation for pre-K programs: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2001.

State pays higher reimbursement rates for quality child care: "A Fragile Foundation: State Child Care Assistance Policies," CDF, 2001. Data also collected from NAEYC and through *Education Week* reporting for *Quality Counts 2002*. This indicator refers to states that have tiered reimbursement systems that pay higher fees to child-care providers that have earned national accreditation or have met state-developed quality ratings or criteria.

TEACHER QUALITY

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SCHOOL READINESS AND ASSESSMENT

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State requires testing for kindergartners to gauge school readiness statewide: "Readiness for School: A Survey of State Policies and Definitions," Richard M. Clifford, NCEDL, 2001.

State pre-K program requires diagnostic/developmental testing: Unpublished data from "Child Assessment at the Preprimary Level," Erikson Institute, forthcoming 2002. *Education Week* collected data for states not credited with pre-K programs by the Erikson Institute.

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The State of The States

States continued to forge ahead on a standards-based agenda in 2001.

BY LORI MEYER, GREG F. ORLOFSKY, RONALD A. SKINNER, AND SCOTT SPICER

Quality Counts 2002 presents a comprehensive picture of what's happening in education policy in the 50 states, and for the first time, the District of Columbia.

In *Quality Counts*, now in its sixth year, *Education Week* reports on student achievement across the states and grades them on standards and accountability, efforts to improve teacher quality, and the adequacy and equity of school resources. Each year, the report's research team strives to update the indicators and the methodology used to compile the grades in line with the best thinking in education policy.

We've expanded the number of ungraded indicators we collected on the states this year. The standards and accountability tables include nearly 20 additional indicators on school report cards, testing, and student-accountability policies. Additional ungraded indicators and a grade-by-grade look at state testing policies are on the Web at www.edweek.org/qc. School climate was not graded this year, while we revise and improve the section. But information compiled from several sources is still presented.

Student Achievement: The results of the 2000 National Assessment of Educational Progress, a federally sponsored survey, have been released for both 4th and 8th grade mathematics and science. Forty-one states and the District of Columbia participated in the assessment.

Since the last administration of the state-level NAEP tests in math in 1996, 17 states have made statistically significant gains in the percentage of students scoring at or above the "proficient" level, with nine states making improvements in math in both the 4th and 8th grades. The new

NAEP science results, released in November, show that seven states had significant improvement in the percentage of 8th graders performing at or above proficient since 1996. The reading and writing assessments were last given in 1998.

Standards and Accountability: States continued to move forward with efforts toward standards-based school improvement in the past year. Five states now have clear and specific standards in all core subjects in all grades, up from three last year, according to the American Federation of Teachers.

In the 2001-02 school year, 37 states will administer standards-based assessments in English and mathematics at least once in elementary, middle, and high school, up from 34 last year. Only 16 states plus the District of Columbia would be in line with President Bush's plan to test all 3rd through 8th graders in English and math each year. In only 13 states and the District would those annual tests be comparable from year to year.

We broadened our definition of "extended response" in assessments this year. Previously, it was limited to written responses of a paragraph or more. To better reflect extended-response items in math, the definition now includes multiple-step problems in which students must explain or show their work. As a result, 18 states get credit for having extended-response items in subjects other than English, up from just seven last year.

States also made incremental progress in planning and implementing school accountability systems. Three additional states—Alaska, Illinois, and Rhode Island—will release school ratings by summer 2002.

Twenty states now have the authority to impose penalties on low-performing schools. That number increased from 14 last year, in part, because we decided to give credit to states that allow students to transfer out of low-performing schools. Eighteen states provide rewards to high-performing or improved schools.

In 17 states, the class of 2002 will be required to pass an exit or end-of-course exam to graduate. Since last year, though, no new states have decided to implement graduation exams, and several have delayed that requirement.

Improving Teacher Quality: States also were active last year in their efforts to improve teaching. Arkansas, Idaho, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and New Mexico now provide support to teachers just entering the classroom, raising to 15 the number of states requiring and at least partially subsidizing induction programs for newly minted teachers.

A few states also changed their testing requirements for prospective teachers. Teachers in Minnesota and Vermont must now pass the appropriate Praxis II content-knowledge exam to become licensed. And beginning in February 2002, New Mexico will have its own subject-knowledge exam that candidates must pass to earn a license.

But Oklahoma deleted the requirement that candidates pass a subject-specific pedagogy test to earn a teaching license in an effort to encourage recruitment of teachers through nontraditional routes.

States also scrambled last year to meet new federal reporting requirements for teacher-preparation institutions. As a result, Massachusetts, Utah, Vermont, and Virginia have established passing rates for graduates on teacher-licensure exams for accountability purposes.

In an attempt to curb out-of-field teaching, Arkansas will now notify parents when a child's teacher is not certified in the subject of the course he or she teaches. Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia now show on school report cards the number of teachers within the school who are teaching outside the subjects in which they're certified.

School Climate: We have suspended grading on school climate while we make improvements in the category. For 2002, many of the indicators remain the same as in past editions of *Quality Counts*, but they have been updated with new data. For the first time, our 50-state policy survey included questions related to school climate. The responses reveal that states are increasingly taking action on issues related to school climate, particularly safety.

Also included this year is information on how states help pay for the construction and renovation of school buildings. Almost three-quarters report that they provide districts with school construction debt service or capital-outlay funding, totaling nearly $13 billion.

The number of charter schools continues to grow, with 37 states and the District of Columbia now having charter laws. The Center for Education Reform, a research and advocacy group in Washington, reports that at least 369 new charter schools opened in 2001. That brought the national total to 2,371, serving more than 576,000 students.

Resource Adequacy and Equity: Last year, *Quality Counts* changed its methodology for grading the equity of state finance systems for education. We added a series of new indicators because we believed the combination of measures would more accurately reflect a state's efforts to close its equity gap. This time, we tackled the adequacy side.

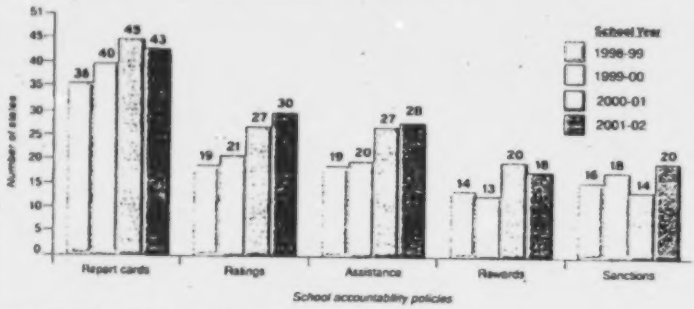
In previous years, our adequacy grades relied heavily on the average spending per pupil. While that information is useful and will remain a part of the system by which we measure adequacy, it does not reflect how a state actually distributes its spending for all students.

For instance, while one state may spend $7,000 on every student, another may spend $4,000 on half its students and $10,000 on the other half. Both states would have the same average per-pupil spending. We wanted to devise a measure that accounts for both the number of students below an "adequate" level of spending and the degree to which spending on those students falls short of adequate.

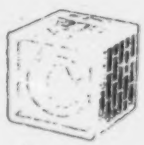
Because policymakers disagree on a dollar figure that provides an adequate education, we used the national

Recent Trends in State Accountability Systems

Over the past four years, many states have implemented school accountability systems, even as other states have strengthened their existing systems. Compared with 1999, 10 additional states and the District of Columbia have school ratings, the cornerstone of school accountability systems. Seven other states plan to implement school ratings by the fall of 2004. Every state with ratings—except the District and Alaska, where the system will not be fully implemented until next year—also provides assistance to at least some low-performing schools. The number of states with sanctions rose this year, in part because our definition of sanctions now includes states that allow students to transfer out of low-performing schools.



Note: The District of Columbia is included in the analysis. Total state count=51.
SOURCE: *Education Week*, 2001



THE STATE OF THE STATES

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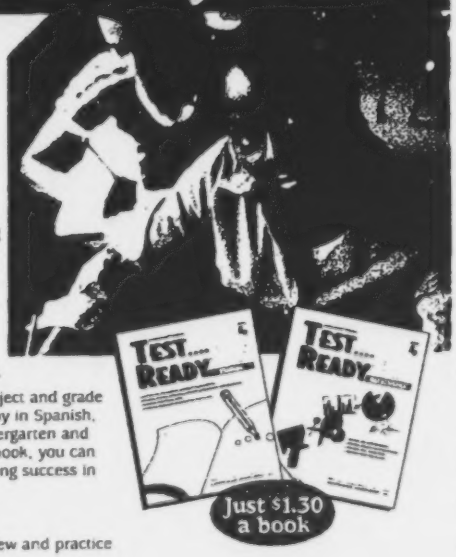

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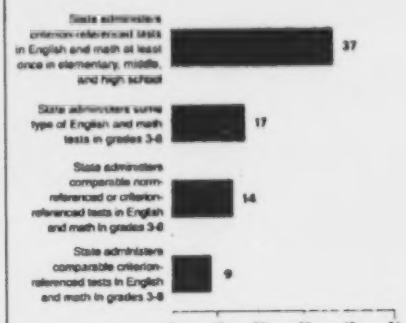
Testing in the States

Most states administer standards-based tests in English and math at least once in elementary, middle, and high school. But only 13 states and the District of Columbia meet the Bush administration's plan for having comparable English and math tests administered to every student in grades 3-8 annually. In only nine of those states are the tests criterion-referenced, meaning aligned with state standards.


State administers criterion-referenced tests in English and math at least once in elementary, middle, and high school
37
State administers some type of English and math tests in grades 3-8
17
State administers comparable norm-referenced or criterion-referenced tests in English and math in grades 3-8
14
State administers comparable criterion-referenced tests in English and math in grades 3-8
9
0
10
20
30
40
51
Number of states

Note: The District of Columbia is included in the analysis. Total state count=51.
SOURCE: Education Week, 2001

per-pupil average (adjusted to reflect the higher costs of educating poor and special education students within a district) as a reasonable benchmark.

To create the "adequacy index," *Education Week* first assigned a 1 to each district where the spending per pupil (adjusted for student needs and cost differences) is equal to or exceeds the national average. Districts where the adjusted spending per pupil is below the national average were assigned a number equal to their district's average per-pupil spending divided by the national average per-pupil spending.

The results were then multiplied by the total number of students in the district. The maximum score any district received equaled its total student enrollment.

To get the adequacy index, district scores were summed, then divided by the total number of students in the state. The adequacy-index column, then, is a state's total score divided by the total number of students in the state. A state would receive a 1 on the adequacy index if every student in the state belonged to a district where the per-pupil spending was at least at the national average. How far an adequacy index falls below 1 shows the state's distance from spending an adequate amount (the national per-pupil average) on all students.

The way in which we grade equity of resources remains unchanged from last year, but we were able to use more timely data. Last year's equity grade depended on 1996-97 federal school finance data. In 2001, the U.S. Census released both the 1997-98 and 1998-99 school finance data. *Education Week* used the 1998-99 data to compute this year's equity grades. For details, see the interpretation section on Page 89. In general, grades for equity have improved since our new system was implemented last year.

A Note of Caution: Readers should take care in comparing this year's grades with those in previous editions of *Quality Counts* because some indicators are not comparable. Also, the counts for the total number of states with a particular policy may differ this year because the District of Columbia is now included in the tables. ■

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Summary of Grades by State

STATE	Student Achievement (Percent scoring at or above proficient)							Standards and Accountability	Improving Teacher Quality	School Climate*	Resources	
	4th grade NAEP math (2000)	8th grade NAEP math (2000)	4th grade NAEP science (2000)	8th grade NAEP science (2000)	4th grade NAEP reading (1998)	8th grade NAEP reading (1998)	8th grade NAEP writing (1998)				Adequacy	Equity
Alabama	14	16	22	22	24	21	17	C+	D	—	C	C+
Alaska	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	D+	D	—	C+	C
Arizona	17	21	22	24	22	28	21	C+	D	—	F	D
Arkansas	13	14	24	23	23	23	13	D+	B-	—	C	C+
California	15	18	14	15	20	22	20	B	C	—	F	C+
Colorado	?	?	?	?	34	30	27	B+	C	—	C	C-
Connecticut	32	34	35	35	46	42	44	B-	B+	—	A-	D
Delaware	?	?	?	?	25	25	22	B+	D+	—	A-	C-
District of Columbia	6	6	?	?	10	12	11	D	D	—	—†	—†
Florida	?	?	?	?	23	23	19	A-	D+	—	C-	B
Georgia	18	19	24	23	24	25	23	B-	C-	—	B-	C-
Hawaii	14	16	16	15	17	19	15	D-	C-	—	B-	A‡
Idaho	21	27	30	38	?	?	?	D	D	—	C-	C
Illinois	21	27	31	30	?	?	?	A-	C	—	C+	F
Indiana	31	31	32	35	?	?	?	B+	C+	—	A-	C-
Iowa	28	?	37	?	35	?	?	F	D+	—	B	C+
Kansas	30	34	?	?	34	35	?	C+	F	—	B	B-
Kentucky	17	21	29	29	29	29	21	A	C+	—	B-	C+
Louisiana	14	12	19	18	19	18	12	A-	C	—	C+	C+
Maine	25	32	38	37	36	42	32	C	D	—	B+	C-
Maryland	22	29	26	28	29	31	23	A	C	—	B	D-
Massachusetts	33	32	43	42	37	36	31	A-	B	—	B-	D
Michigan	29	28	33	37	28	?	?	C	C-	—	A-	C-
Minnesota	34	40	35	42	36	37	25	D-	C	—	B+	B-
Mississippi	9	8	14	15	18	19	11	D+	C	—	D+	C
Missouri	23	22	35	36	29	29	17	B	C	—	C	D+
Montana	25	37	37	46	37	38	25	F	D	—	B-	D-
Nebraska	24	31	26	36	?	?	?	F	C-	—	B	D+
Nevada	16	20	19	23	21	24	17	B-	C-	—	C-	B
New Hampshire	?	?	?	?	38	?	?	C	D	—	C	F
New Jersey	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	C	C+	—	A	D
New Mexico	12	13	18	20	22	24	18	B	C-	—	C	B+
New York	22	26	26	30	29	34	21	A	C	—	A	D+
North Carolina	28	30	24	27	28	31	27	B	B+	—	C	C
North Dakota	25	31	38	40	30	?	?	D	F	—	B	F
Ohio	26	31	32	41	28	?	?	C-	C	—	B-	D-
Oklahoma	16	19	26	26	?	29	25	B	B-	—	C	B-
Oregon	23	32	28	33	?	33	27	B	D+	—	B	C+
Pennsylvania	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	B-	C-	—	B+	D-
Rhode Island	23	24	27	29	32	30	25	D+	D+	—	A-	D+
South Carolina	18	18	21	20	22	22	15	B+	B	—	B-	C
South Dakota	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	D+	F	—	C+	C
Tennessee	18	17	26	25	25	26	24	C+	C	—	D+	D+
Texas	27	24	24	23	29	28	31	B-	D+	—	C	C+
Utah	24	26	32	35	28	31	21	C	D	—	F	B+
Vermont	29	32	39	40	?	?	?	C	C+	—	A	C-
Virginia	25	26	33	31	30	33	27	B	C+	—	C+	D+
Washington	?	?	?	?	29	32	25	D+	D+	—	C	C+
West Virginia	18	18	25	26	29	27	18	C	C	—	A	C+
Wisconsin	?	?	?	?	34	33	28	D	D+	—	A	C+
Wyoming	25	25	33	36	30	29	23	D-	F	—	A	C
U.S.	25	26	28	30	29	31	24	—	—	—	—	—

? Indicates state did not participate in the national assessment.
*School climate was not graded this year. †Because the District of Columbia does not have a state revenue source, it did not receive a grade for adequacy or equity. ‡Hawaii has a single statewide district.

Student Achievement

MATH (all figures in percents)

4th grade performance on the 2000 NAEP mathematics exam

STATE	At or above proficient	Basic	Below basic
Minnesota	34	44	22
Massachusetts	33'	45	21
Connecticut	32	45	23
Indiana	31'	48	22
Kansas	30	46	25
Vermont	29'	44	27
Michigan	29'	43	28
Iowa	28'	50	22
North Carolina	28'	48	24
Texas	27	50	23
Ohio	26	48	27
Maine	25	50	26
North Dakota	25	50	25
Montana	25	48	27
Wyoming	25'	48	27
Virginia	25'	47	27
Utah	24	46	30
Nebraska	24	43	33
Missouri	23	49	28
Oregon	23	44	33
Rhode Island	23'	44	33
New York	22	45	33
Maryland	22	39	39
Idaho	21	49	29
Illinois	21	44	34
West Virginia	18	49	32
South Carolina	18'	42	40
Tennessee	18	42	40
Georgia	18'	40	42
Kentucky	17	43	40
Arizona	17	42	42
Oklahoma	16	53	31
Nevada	16	44	39
California	15	38	48
Alabama	14	43	43
Louisiana	14'	43	43
Hawaii	14	41	45
Arkansas	13	43	44
New Mexico	12	39	49
Mississippi	9	36	55
District of Columbia	6	19	76
Alaska	?	?	?
Colorado	?	?	?
Delaware	?	?	?
Florida	?	?	?
New Hampshire	?	?	?
New Jersey	?	?	?
Pennsylvania	?	?	?
South Dakota	?	?	?
Washington	?	?	?
Wisconsin	?	?	?
U.S.	25	42	33

MATH (all figures in percents)

8th grade performance on the 2000 NAEP mathematics exam

STATE	At or above proficient	Basic	Below basic
Minnesota	40'	40	20
Montana	37'	43	20
Kansas	34	43	23
Connecticut	34	38	28
Maine	32	44	24
Massachusetts	32'	43	24
Vermont	32'	43	25
Oregon	32'	40	29
North Dakota	31	46	23
Indiana	31'	45	24
Ohio	31	45	25
Nebraska	31	43	26
North Carolina	30'	40	30
Maryland	29	36	35
Michigan	28	41	30
Idaho	27	44	29
Illinois	27	41	32
New York	26	42	32
Utah	26	42	32
Virginia	26'	42	33
Wyoming	25'	45	30
Texas	24	44	32
Rhode Island	24'	41	36
Missouri	22	45	33
Kentucky	21'	42	37
Arizona	21	41	38
Nevada	20	39	42
Oklahoma	19	46	36
Georgia	19	37	45
West Virginia	18'	44	38
South Carolina	18'	37	45
California	18	34	48
Tennessee	17	36	47
Alabama	16	36	48
Hawaii	16	36	48
Arkansas	14	38	48
New Mexico	13	36	50
Louisiana	12'	36	52
Mississippi	8	33	59
District of Columbia	6	17	77
Alaska	?	?	?
Colorado	?	?	?
Delaware	?	?	?
Florida	?	?	?
Iowa	?	?	?
New Hampshire	?	?	?
New Jersey	?	?	?
Pennsylvania	?	?	?
South Dakota	?	?	?
Washington	?	?	?
Wisconsin	?	?	?
U.S.	26	38	35

SCIENCE (all figures in percents)

4th grade performance on the 2000 NAEP science exam

STATE	At or above proficient	Basic	Below basic
Massachusetts	43	38	19
Vermont	39	40	22
Maine	38	43	18
North Dakota	38	43	20
Iowa	37	44	19
Montana	37	44	19
Minnesota	35	42	22
Connecticut	35	40	25
Missouri	35	40	25
Wyoming	33	47	20
Virginia	33	41	26
Michigan	33	38	29
Utah	32	43	25
Indiana	32	42	25
Ohio	32	40	28
Illinois	31	37	32
Idaho	30	42	28
Kentucky	29	42	30
Oregon	28	40	33
Rhode Island	27	40	34
Oklahoma	26	45	29
Nebraska	26	41	32
New York	26	41	33
Tennessee	26	38	37
Maryland	26	36	39
West Virginia	25	45	31
North Carolina	24	40	36
Texas	24	40	35
Arkansas	24	38	38
Georgia	24	34	42
Alabama	22	37	41
Arizona	22	35	43
South Carolina	21	35	44
Nevada	19	39	42
Louisiana	19	35	47
New Mexico	18	36	46
Hawaii	16	35	49
California	14	33	53
Mississippi	14	33	53
Alaska	?	?	?
Colorado	?	?	?
Delaware	?	?	?
District of Columbia	?	?	?
Florida	?	?	?
Kansas	?	?	?
New Hampshire	?	?	?
New Jersey	?	?	?
Pennsylvania	?	?	?
South Dakota	?	?	?
Washington	?	?	?
Wisconsin	?	?	?
U.S.	28	37	36

NOTE: States are ranked by percent at or above proficient, then by percent basic. Ties are ranked alphabetically. Percentages may not add up to 100 because of rounding.
? Indicates state did not participate in national assessment.
'Statistically significant gain in the percent scoring at or above proficient since the last administration of the test. Data were not available for the 4th grade science.

STATE	SCIENCE (all figures in percents) 8th grade performance on the 2000 NAEP science exams: At or above proficient	Basic	Below basic
Montana	46	34	20
Massachusetts	42'	32	26
Minnesota	42	32	27
Ohio	41	32	27
North Dakota	40	34	26
Vermont	40'	34	26
Idaho	38	35	27
Maine	37	38	25
Michigan	37	32	31
Wyoming	36	35	29
Nebraska	36	34	30
Missouri	36'	32	32
Indiana	35	34	32
Utah	35	34	32
Connecticut	35	30	35
Oregon	33	34	33
Virginia	31	32	37
New York	30	32	39
Illinois	30	31	39
Kentucky	29'	33	38
Rhode Island	29	32	39
Maryland	28	31	41
North Carolina	27	30	44
Oklahoma	26	35	38
West Virginia	26'	34	39
Tennessee	25	32	43
Arizona	24	33	43
Arkansas	23	31	46
Nevada	23	31	46
Texas	23	30	47
Georgia	23	28	49
Alabama	22'	29	49
South Carolina	20	29	50
New Mexico	20	28	52
Louisiana	18	27	55
Mississippi	15	27	58
California	15	25	60
Hawaii	15	25	60
Alaska	?	?	?
Colorado	?	?	?
Delaware	?	?	?
District of Columbia	?	?	?
Florida	?	?	?
Iowa	?	?	?
Kansas	?	?	?
New Hampshire	?	?	?
New Jersey	?	?	?
Pennsylvania	?	?	?
South Dakota	?	?	?
Washington	?	?	?
Wisconsin	?	?	?
U.S.	30	29	41

STATE	UNGRADED: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Percent of public high schools offering Advanced Placement courses (2000)	Percent of 8th graders taking Algebra 1, Algebra 2, or geometry (2000)	Percent of high school students taking upper-level ... mathematics courses (2000)	Percent of high school students taking upper-level ... science courses (2000)	Percent of 16- to 19-year-olds not in school who had not graduated (1998)	Percent of 9th to 12th graders who dropped out of school (1999)
Alabama	38	16	34	23	10	4.4
Alaska	10	?	?	?	7	5.3
Arizona	59	29	?	?	17	8.4
Arkansas	33	20	51	29	12	6.0
California	83	36	34	18	9	?
Colorado	49	?	?	?	13	?
Connecticut	98	32	53	35	9	3.3
Delaware	96	?	?	?	11	4.1
District of Columbia	56	37	46	26	11	8.2
Florida	84	?	?	?	12	?
Georgia	81	29	?	?	13	7.4
Hawaii	83	18	?	?	5	?
Idaho	47	28	41	17	10	6.9
Illinois	55	26	?	?	9	6.5
Indiana	78	28	44	30	5	?
Iowa	35	?	45	35	7	2.5
Kansas	24	34	?	?	7	?
Kentucky	68	24	53	29	11	4.9
Louisiana	23	12	46	23	11	10.0
Maine	83	25	?	?	7	3.3
Maryland	91	41	?	?	7	4.4
Massachusetts	96	38	56	39	6	3.8
Michigan	65	30	?	?	9	?
Minnesota	49	27	36	22	6	4.5
Mississippi	36	19	55	42	10	5.2
Missouri	31	25	51	31	9	4.8
Montana	36	20	?	?	8	4.5
Nebraska	16	28	60	34	8	4.2
Nevada	58	18	34	25	17	7.9
New Hampshire	85	?	?	?	7	?
New Jersey	98	?	?	?	6	3.1
New Mexico	55	22	31	19	13	7.0
New York	85	?	48	34	9	?
North Carolina	90	29	61	30	11	?
North Dakota	9	17	53	34	5	2.4
Ohio	66	25	47	20	8	3.9
Oklahoma	45	22	43	24	9	5.2
Oregon	54	29	37	19	13	6.5
Pennsylvania	74	?	?	?	7	3.8
Rhode Island	67	36	?	?	11	4.5
South Carolina	93	28	?	?	9	?
South Dakota	23	?	47	35	8	4.5
Tennessee	54	21	35	19	12	4.6
Texas	70	30	56	24	12	?
Utah	78	51	57	36	9	4.7
Vermont	88	24	41	27	6	4.6
Virginia	85	38	?	?	8	4.5
Washington	63	?	?	?	8	?
West Virginia	67	30	56	39	8	4.9
Wisconsin	78	?	56	37	5	2.6
Wyoming	31	25	40	21	9	5.2
U.S.	62	27	46	28	9	—

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Standards and Accountability

STATE	Overall grade for standards and accountability		STANDARDS - 40% of grade						ASSESSMENTS - 30% of grade				
			State has adopted standards in core subjects (2000)	State has clear and specific standards (2000)				State has a regular timeline for revising standards (2000)	Types of test items state uses to measure student or school performance (2001-02)				
				English/ language arts	Mathematics	Science	Social studies/ history		Multiple-choice	Short-answer	Extended-response English	Extended-response Other subject(s)	Portfolio
Maryland	A	98	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	MS HS	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	
New York	A	97	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	
Kentucky	A	94	✔	ES	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	MS HS		ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS
Louisiana	A-	92	✔		ES MS HS	ES MS HS	MS HS		ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	
Illinois	A-	91	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	MS HS		ES MS HS		ES MS HS	ES MS	
Florida	A-	90	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES HS		ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	
Massachusetts	A-	90	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	MS HS		ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS		
Colorado	B+	89	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS		ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS		
Delaware	B+	89	✔	ES MS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	MS HS		ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS		
Indiana	B+	88	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS		
South Carolina	B+	87	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	MS HS	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS	ES MS HS		
Oregon	B	86	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	MS HS	✔	ES MS HS		ES MS HS	ES MS HS	
Virginia	B	86	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS	ES MS HS	✔	ES MS HS		ES MS HS		
California	B	85	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS		ES MS HS		ES MS		
Missouri	B	84	✔		ES MS HS	ES MS HS	HS		ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	
New Mexico	B	83	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	MS HS	✔	ES MS HS	HS	ES MS HS		
North Carolina	B	83	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS		✔	ES MS HS		ES MS HS		
Oklahoma	B	83	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	HS	✔	ES MS HS		ES MS		
Connecticut	B-	82	✔	ES HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	MS		ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	
Texas	B-	82	✔	ES HS	ES MS HS	ES MS			ES MS HS	HS	ES MS HS		
Georgia	B-	80	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	HS	✔	ES MS HS		ES MS HS		
Nevada	B-	80	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	MS HS	MS HS	✔	ES MS HS	ES	ES MS HS		
Pennsylvania	B-	80	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS		ES MS HS		ES MS HS	ES MS HS	
Alabama	C+	79	✔	ES	ES MS HS	ES MS	ES MS HS	✔	ES MS HS		ES MS		
Tennessee	C+	79	✔	ES MS	ES MS HS	MS HS	ES MS	✔	ES MS HS		ES MS HS		
Arizona	C+	77	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS		ES MS HS	ES MS	ES MS HS		
Kansas	C+	77	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	✔	ES MS HS				
Maine	C	76	✔	MS HS	ES	ES MS HS		✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	
Michigan	C	76	✔		ES MS HS	ES MS HS			ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	
New Jersey	C	76	✔		ES MS HS	ES MS HS	MS HS	✔	ES MS HS	HS	ES MS HS	ES HS	
West Virginia	C	76	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	MS		ES MS HS		ES MS HS		
Utah	C	74	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS		ES MS HS	MS HS	MS HS		
Vermont	C	74	✔			ES MS HS		✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES HS	ES MS HS
New Hampshire	C	73	✔	MS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	MS HS		ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS		
Ohio	C-	72	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS			✔	ES MS HS	ES MS	ES MS HS		
Alaska	D+	68	✔		ES MS HS	ES MS HS		✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS		
Arkansas	D+	68	✔	ES MS	ES MS	ES MS HS		✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS		
Rhode Island	D+	68	3 subjects			ES MS HS			ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES	
South Dakota	D+	68	✔	MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HE	ES HS	✔	ES MS HS		ES HS		
Washington	D+	68	✔	ES	ES MS	ES MS HS			ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES HS	
Mississippi	D+	67	✔	ES MS	ES MS HS	ES MS		✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS		
Idaho	D	65	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	MS			ES MS	ES MS HS		
Wisconsin	D	65	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS				ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS		
District of Columbia	D	63	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	HS		ES MS HS				
North Dakota	D	63	✔		ES MS HS	ES MS HS	MS HS	✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS			
Hawaii	D-	62	✔		ES MS HS			✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	
Minnesota	D-	62	✔		ES MS HS	ES MS HS		✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES HS		
Wyoming	D-	62	✔		ES MS HS			✔	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	
Nebraska	F	54	✔		ES MS HS	ES MS HS	MS HS				ES		
Montana	F	40	✔			MS HS		✔	ES MS HS				
Iowa	F	31							ES MS HS				
U.S.	—	—	49	—	—	—	—	27	—	—	—	—	—

NOTE: States are ranked by number grade to the nearest whole number; ties are ranked alphabetically.

ASSESSMENTS: Subjects in which state uses criterion-referenced assessments aligned to state standards (2001-02)				State participated in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (2000)	State criterion-referenced tests have undergone an external alignment review (2000)	SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY - 30% of grade: State holds schools accountable for performance (2001)				STATE
English/ language arts	Mathematics	Science	Social studies/ history			Report cards	Report cards include disaggregated data	State provides public with data on similar schools	State requires that school report cards be sent home	
ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	Maryland
ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	✔		✔	✔	✔	✔	New York
ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	✔		✔	✔		✔	Kentucky
ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	✔		✔		✔	✔	Louisiana
ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	Illinois
ES MS HS	ES MS HS					✔			✔	Florida
ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS	ES MS	✔	✔	✔	✔			Massachusetts
ES MS HS	ES MS HS	MS				✔			✔	Colorado
ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS			✔				Delaware
ES MS HS	ES MS HS			✔	✔	✔				Indiana
ES MS	ES MS	ES MS		✔		✔	✔	✔	✔	South Carolina
ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS		✔	✔	✔		✔	✔	Oregon
ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	✔		✔			✔	Virginia
ES MS HS	ES MS HS	HS	HS	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	California
ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	✔		Fall 2002				Missouri
ES MS HS	HS	HS	HS	✔	✔	✔			✔	New Mexico
ES MS HS	ES MS HS	HS	HS	✔	✔	✔				North Carolina
ES MS HS	ES MS	ES MS	ES MS HS	✔	✔	✔	✔		✔	Oklahoma
ES MS HS	ES MS HS	HS		✔		✔				Connecticut
ES MS HS	ES MS HS	MS HS	MS HS	✔		✔	✔	✔	✔	Texas
ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	✔		✔	✔			Georgia
ES MS HS	ES HS			✔		✔				Nevada
ES MS HS	ES MS HS				✔	✔				Pennsylvania
ES MS HS	HS	HS	HS	✔		✔				Alabama
ES MS HS	HS	HS		✔	✔	✔				Tennessee
ES MS HS	ES MS HS			✔		✔		✔		Arizona
ES MS HS	ES MS HS			✔		✔	✔		✔	Kansas
ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	✔		✔				Maine
ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	✔	✔					Michigan
ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS	ES		✔	✔				New Jersey
ES MS HS				✔		✔			✔	West Virginia
ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS		✔	✔	Fall 2003				Utah
ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES HS		✔	✔	✔	✔			Vermont
ES MS HS	ES MS HS	MS HS	MS HS							New Hampshire
ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	ES MS HS	✔	✔	✔	✔		✔	Ohio
ES MS HS	ES MS HS					✔				Alaska
ES MS HS	ES MS HS			✔		✔			✔	Arkansas
ES MS HS	ES MS HS			✔		✔	✔	✔		Rhode Island
ES MS HS	ES MS HS					✔				South Dakota
ES MS HS	ES MS HS				✔	✔			✔	Washington
ES MS HS	ES MS HS	HS	HS	✔						Mississippi
ES MS HS	ES MS			✔						Idaho
				✔		✔	✔			Wisconsin
				✔		✔				District of Columbia
ES MS HS	ES MS HS			✔						North Dakota
ES MS HS	ES MS HS			✔		✔			✔	Hawaii
ES HS	ES HS			✔	✔	✔	✔			Minnesota
ES MS HS	ES MS HS			✔	✔	✔				Wyoming
ES				✔		✔	✔			Nebraska
				✔						Montana
				✔		✔				Iowa
—	—	—	—	42	19	43	17	10	20	U.S.

ES = Elementary school level
MS = Middle school level
HS = High school level

Standards and Accountability

STATE	SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY: State holds schools accountable for performance (2001-02) — Information state uses to evaluate schools: Ratings	Student test scores only	Student test scores and other information[1]	Site visits or interviews	Sanctions the state has the authority to use for persistently low-performing schools: Assistance	Sanctions	Closure	Reconstitution	Permit student transfers	Withhold funds
Maryland	✔		✔		✔	✔	✔	✔		✔
New York	✔		✔		✔	✔	✔	✔		
Kentucky	✔		✔		✔	✔			✔	
Louisiana	✔		✔		✔	✔		✔	✔	✔
Illinois	✔	✔			✔	✔	✔		✔	
Florida	✔	✔			✔	✔			✔	
Massachusetts	✔	✔			✔	✔		✔		
Colorado	✔	✔			✔	✔	✔		✔	
Delaware	✔	✔			✔					
Indiana	✔		✔	✔	✔	✔			✔	
South Carolina	✔	✔			✔	✔	✔	✔		
Oregon	✔		✔		✔					
Virginia	✔	✔			✔					
California	✔	✔			✔		2002-03	2002-03	2002-03	
Missouri	✔	✔			✔	✔		✔		
New Mexico	✔		✔		✔					
North Carolina	✔		✔		✔	✔		✔		
Oklahoma	✔		✔		✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	
Connecticut	✔	✔			✔					
Texas	✔		✔		✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	
Georgia	Fall 2003				2004-05					
Nevada	✔		✔		✔	✔		✔		
Pennsylvania										
Alabama	✔	✔			✔	✔		✔		
Tennessee	✔		✔		✔	✔		✔	✔	
Arizona										
Kansas	✔		✔	✔	✔					
Maine										
Michigan	Fall 2002				2002-03					
New Jersey										
West Virginia	✔		✔	✔	✔	✔		✔	✔	
Utah	Fall 2004									
Vermont	✔		✔		✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	
New Hampshire										
Ohio	Fall 2004				2004-05					
Alaska	✔	✔								
Arkansas	Fall 2003				2003-04		2003-04	2003-04		
Rhode Island	✔	✔			✔	✔	✔	✔		
South Dakota										
Washington										
Mississippi	Fall 2003				2003-04			2003-04	2003-04	
Idaho										
Wisconsin	✔	✔			✔					
District of Columbia	✔	✔								
North Dakota										
Hawaii	Fall 2002									
Minnesota										
Wyoming										
Nebraska										
Montana										
Iowa										
U.S.	30	15	15	3	28	20	9	15	11	2

NOTE: States are ranked by number grade to the nearest whole number; ties are ranked alphabetically.
[1]The District of Columbia issues school performance target's every year and therefore receives credit for having school ratings. While the District does assist and intervene in low-performing schools identified through a separate Targeted Assistance Reform Initiative, no schools have been identified as low-performing under this initiative since 1998, and it is not part of the school rating system. [2]State uses the performance of specific subgroups, such as minority, limited-English-proficient, low-income, or low-achieving students, to rate schools. [3]Other information may include attendance, dropout/graduation rates, course-taking data, or other indicators. [4]State provides assistance to all low-performing schools.

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Rewards	UNGRADED STUDENT ACCOUNTABILITY: Promotion contingent upon performance on statewide exams (2000)	Graduation contingent upon statewide exit or end-of-course exams (2000)	Exit or end-of-course exams are based on state 10th grade standards or higher (2000)	State requires remediation for students failing ... promotion exams (2000)	State requires remediation for students failing ... end-of-course or exit exams (2000)	State finances remediation for students failing ... promotion exams (2000)	State finances remediation for students failing ... end-of-course or exit exams (2000)	STATE
✔		✔	Class of 2007		✔			Maryland
		✔	✔		✔		✔	New York
✔								Kentucky
✔	✔	✔	Class of 2003	✔	✔	✔	✔	Louisiana
								Illinois
✔		✔	Class of 2003		✔		✔	Florida
		Class of 2003	Class of 2003				✔	Massachusetts
✔								Colorado
✔	✔			✔		✔		Delaware
✔		✔			✔		✔	Indiana
✔	2003	✔	Class of 2006	2003	✔		✔	South Carolina
								Oregon
		Class of 2004	Class of 2004				✔	Virginia
✔		Class of 2004	Class of 2004					California
								Missouri
✔	✔	✔	✔	✔				New Mexico
✔	✔	✔	Class of 2005	✔	✔	✔		North Carolina
2002-03								Oklahoma
								Connecticut
✔	2003	✔	✔	2003	✔	2003	✔	Texas
✔	2004	✔	✔		✔		✔	Georgia
		✔	✔		✔		✔	Nevada
✔								Pennsylvania
✔		✔	✔		✔		✔	Alabama
✔		✔	Class of 2005		✔			Tennessee
		Class of 2006	Class of 2006					Arizona
								Kansas
								Maine
✔								Michigan
✔		✔	Class of 2003		✔			New Jersey
								West Virginia
		Class of 2005						Utah
								Vermont
								New Hampshire
		✔	Class of 2007		✔		✔	Ohio
		Class of 2004	Class of 2004				✔	Alaska
2003-04								Arkansas
								Rhode Island
								South Dakota
		Class of 2008	Class of 2008					Washington
	2004	✔	Class of 2003					Mississippi
								Idaho
								Wisconsin
								District of Columbia
								North Dakota
								Hawaii
		✔			✔			Minnesota
								Wyoming
								Nebraska
								Montana
								Iowa
18	4	17	6	4	15	3	13	U.S

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Improving Teacher Quality

STATE	Overall grade for teacher quality		TEACHER ASSESSMENT = 35% of grade						
			State requires written tests for beginning teacher license upon:			State requires performance assessment for second stage of certification upon:			
							State performance assessment		
			Basic skills	Subject knowledge	Subject-specific pedagogy	Local team evaluation	Classroom observation	Videotaped lesson	Portfolio
North Carolina	B+	88	✔	✔	✔	✔		✔	✔
Connecticut	B+	87	✔	✔	✔			✔	✔
Massachusetts	B	84	✔	✔	✔				
South Carolina	B	84	✔	✔	✔	✔			
Arkansas	B-	82	✔	✔	✔		✔		
Oklahoma	B-	81	✔	✔	✔	✔			
Kentucky	C+	79	✔	✔	✔	✔			
Indiana	C+	78	✔	✔	✔				
New Jersey	C+	78	✔	✔					
Vermont	C+	78	✔	✔					
Virginia	C+	78	✔	✔					
Colorado	C	76		✔					
Illinois	C	76	✔	✔	✔				
New York	C	76	✔	✔	✔			✔	
West Virginia	C	76	✔	✔	✔				
Louisiana	C	75	✔	✔	✔	✔			
Missouri	C	75	✔	✔	✔				
Tennessee	C	75	✔	✔	✔				
California	C	74	✔	✔	✔				
Minnesota	C	74	✔	✔					
Maryland	C	73	✔	✔	✔				
Mississippi	C	73	✔	✔	✔				
Ohio	C	73		✔	✔				
Georgia	C-	71	✔	✔	✔				
Hawaii	C-	71	✔	✔	✔				
Nebraska	C-	71	✔						
Nevada	C-	71	✔	✔	✔				
New Mexico	C-	71	✔	✔					
Pennsylvania	C-	71	✔	✔	✔				
Michigan	C-	70	✔	✔					
Delaware	D+	69	✔						
Texas	D+	68		✔	✔				
Wisconsin	D+	68	✔						
Florida	D+	67	✔	✔					
Iowa	D+	67							
Oregon	D+	67	✔	✔					
Rhode Island	D+	67							
Washington	D+	67				✔			
District of Columbia	D	66	✔	✔	✔				
Utah	D	66							
Arizona	D	65		✔	✔				
Maine	D	65	✔						
Alabama	D	64	✔						
Idaho	D	64							
Montana	D	64	✔						
Alaska	D	63	✔						
New Hampshire	D	62	✔	✔					
Kansas	F	59							
North Dakota	F	59							
South Dakota	F	58							
Wyoming	F	57							
U.S.	—	—	37	32	22	6	1	3	2

NOTE: States are ranked by number grade to the nearest whole number. Ties are ranked alphabetically.
*State requires test, but not for beginning license. These states do not receive credit or count in the U.S. total.

79

TEACHER ASSESSMENT - 35% of grade			TEACHING IN FIELD - 30% of grade					
State provides incentives to earn National Board certification (2001)		Number of teachers certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (2001)	Percent of secondary teachers who hold degrees in the subjects they teach (1994)	Minimum degree/coursework required for initial secondary license (2001)		State discourages out-of-field teaching (2001)		STATE
Licensure incentives	Financial incentives			All high school teachers	All middle school teachers	Secondary subject-area license for middle school	Parent notification or data on school report card	
✔	✔	3,660	66	n/a[2]	n/a[2]	✔		North Carolina
✔		53	74	major	minor (major)[3]	✔		Connecticut
✔	✔	268	72	n/a[2]	n/a[2]	✔		Massachusetts
✔	✔	1,291	63	major			✔	South Carolina
✔	✔	58	60	(major)[3]			✔	Arkansas
✔	✔	394	61	major		✔		Oklahoma
✔	✔	141	53			✔	✔	Kentucky
✔		75	70	minor	minor	✔		Indiana
✔		47	69	major	major	✔		New Jersey
	✔	34	73	major	minor (major)[3]	✔		Vermont
✔	✔	278	61	major	minor (major)[3]	✔	✔	Virginia
✔		119	66	major	major	✔	✔	Colorado
✔	✔	352	72	major	minor	✔		Illinois
✔	✔	185	75	major	major	✔		New York
✔	✔	54	60			✔		West Virginia
	✔	85	50	minor				Louisiana
✔	✔	75	65	major	minor	✔		Missouri
✔	✔	40	56	major	(major)[3]		✔	Tennessee
✔	✔	1,303	51	major	(major)[3]			California
✔		203	81	minor (major)[3]	minor (major)[3]	✔		Minnesota
✔	✔	138	72	major				Maryland
✔	✔	1,159	61	major				Mississippi
✔	✔	1,334	61	major	major	✔	✔	Ohio
✔	✔	422	68	major				Georgia
	✔	7	67	major				Hawaii
		27	75	major	minor	✔		Nebraska
✔	✔	64	66	minor				Nevada
✔		101	52	minor	(minor)[3]			New Mexico
✔		49	72					Pennsylvania
✔	✔	113	67	minor (major)[3]	minor (major)[3]	✔		Michigan
✔	✔	106	71	major	some subjects	✔		Delaware
		58	51	n/a[2]	n/a[2]			Texas
✔	✔	74	63	major				Wisconsin
✔	✔	2,256	62	major	minor	✔	✔	Florida
✔	✔	321	70	major				Iowa
✔		30	59					Oregon
✔	✔	62	76	major	major	✔		Rhode Island
✔	✔	112	61	minor (major)[3]	(major)[3]			Washington
✔		6	73	major				District of Columbia
✔		14	62	minor (major)[3]	minor	✔		Utah
✔		102	58	n/a[2]	n/a[2]			Arizona
✔		23	59	major				Maine
✔	✔	308	63					Alabama
✔	✔	272	56	minor (major)[3]				Idaho
✔	✔	20	64	minor (major)[3]				Montana
✔		22	64					Alaska
✔		2	71	major				New Hampshire
✔	✔	68	60					Kansas
✔	✔	9	76	minor (major)[3]				North Dakota
	✔	8	59	minor	minor	✔		South Dakota
✔	✔	25	72	minor				Wyoming
45	35	16,026	63	26	5	23	8	U.S.

[1]State holds teacher-training programs accountable instead of requiring specific coursework. [2]State requires a noneducation major, but not in the subject taught. [3]State requires a noneducation minor, but not in the subject taught. [4]State requires subject concentration on elementary certificate if used in middle school.

Improving Teacher Quality

STATE	PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT AND TRAINING - 20% of grade			TEACHER EDUCATION - 15% of grade			UNGRADED: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION			
	State requires and finances induction for beginning teachers (2001)	State supports ongoing professional development for all teachers (2001)		Teacher-training programs held accountable for graduates' assessment scores (2001)	State requires clinical experiences during teacher training (2001)		Average teacher salaries, adjusted for the cost of living (2000)		State has policies encouraging pay for performance (2000)	State offers incentives for teachers in low-performing schools (2000)
		Time for professional development	State funds professional development		Minimum weeks for student teaching	Other kinds of clinical experiences	Average starting salary	Average salary (all teachers)		
North Carolina	✔		✔	✔	10		$30,539	$43,012	✔	✔
Connecticut	✔		✔		10		$25,352	$43,612		✔
Massachusetts	✔		✔	✔	5[1]	✔	$26,566	$41,126	✔	
South Carolina	✔	✔	✔		12	✔	$27,771	$39,738		✔
Arkansas	✔	✔	✔		12		$25,964	$38,539	✔	
Oklahoma	✔	✔	✔		12	✔	$27,407	$33,681		
Kentucky	✔	✔	✔		12		$27,993	$41,000	✔	
Indiana	✔		✔		10		$29,306	$46,196		
New Jersey	✔		✔		18		$26,542	$44,305		
Vermont		✔		✔	12	✔	$26,471	$37,362		
Virginia	✔		✔	✔	10		$27,383	$39,865		
Colorado			✔		13[2]	✔	$25,348	$39,816		✔
Illinois			✔		10	✔	$30,745	$47,398		✔
New York			✔	✔			$29,227	$46,731		✔
West Virginia	✔	✔	✔		12		$27,048	$39,740		
Louisiana	✔	✔	✔		6[1]		$28,460	$38,611		
Missouri		✔	✔		8	✔	$28,306	$38,857		
Tennessee		✔	✔	✔	15		$30,258	$40,371	✔	
California	✔	✔	✔			✔	$26,225	$38,845	✔	✔
Minnesota			✔		12		$26,949	$42,712	✔	
Maryland			✔		30		$27,161	$41,503		✔
Mississippi		✔	✔	✔	15		$26,339	$36,464		
Ohio		✔	✔		10		$25,017	$44,223		
Georgia			✔		10		$32,685	$44,210	✔	
Hawaii			✔		10		$21,820	$30,851		
Nebraska		✔	✔		14	✔	$25,785	$37,358		
Nevada		✔	✔		12		$29,211	$43,798		✔
New Mexico	✔	✔	✔		14		$26,430	$34,526		
Pennsylvania			✔		12		$30,911	$49,493	✔	
Michigan		✔			10		$30,878	$52,711		✔
Delaware		✔	✔			✔	$30,113	$47,005		
Texas			✔	✔	12		$31,568	$41,758		✔
Wisconsin			✔		18	✔	$27,339	$43,038		
Florida			✔	✔	10[1]		$26,631	$38,912		
Iowa			✔		12	✔	$28,435	$40,138	✔	
Oregon			✔		15		$31,413	$47,652		
Rhode Island			✔		10[1]		$25,843	$45,593		
Washington		✔	✔			✔	$26,281	$40,687		
District of Columbia		✔	✔		7		$26,896	$38,740		
Utah		✔	✔	✔	10		$24,820	$37,269		
Arizona				✔	6[1]		$26,696	$35,297	✔	
Maine		✔	✔		15		$24,007	$37,212		
Alabama		✔	✔		12		$33,411	$41,148		
Idaho	✔		✔				$22,885	$38,467		
Montana		✔	✔		10		$22,679	$34,741		
Alaska		✔	✔		10		$26,941	$37,185		
New Hampshire							$23,337	$35,724		
Kansas			✔				$28,124	$40,409		
North Dakota					10		$22,517	$32,927		
South Dakota					10		$24,990	$33,190		
Wyoming							$25,906	$36,646		
U.S.	15	24	44	11	—	13	$27,989	$41,820	11	11

[1] State provides professional-development funds for all local education agencies/districts.
[2] District on Week converted semester-hour requirements into weeks.
Connecticut requires 800 hours of student teaching and other kinds of clinical experiences. *Education Week* converted 400 of these hours to estimate the minimum number of weeks required for student teaching.

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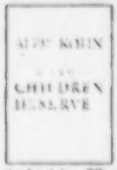
NEW ITEM

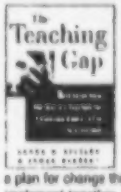
Leading in a Culture of Change
By Michael Fullan. Good leadership is not innate. Business, nonprofit, and public sector leaders are facing new and daunting challenges – rapid-paced developments in technology, sudden shifts in the marketplace, and crisis and contention in the public arena. This book provides insights into the dynamics of change and the role of leadership in managing and coping with the change process. #0787953954 **$29.00**

Shaking Up the Schoolhouse: How to Support and Sustain Educational Innovation
By Phillip C. Schlechty. Renowned educator Phillip Schlechty shows educators how to coordinate efforts and systematically focus on results that matter – setting learning and performance goals, evaluating and aligning curriculum, planning daily or year-long programs, and supervising staff development. And, he demonstrates how rules, roles, relationships, values, traditions, and beliefs define the structure, culture, and systems of schools. #0787955408 **$26.95**



The Schools Our Children Deserve: Moving Beyond Traditional Classrooms and "Tougher Standards"
By Alfie Kohn. The demand for tougher standards reflects a lack of understanding about how and why children actually learn. When we encourage students to become obsessed with how well they're doing in school, they often lose interest in what they're doing. Offers an ambitious yet practical vision of what should replace the "bunch o' facts" model in our children's classrooms. #0618083458 **$14.00**

Standardized Minds: The High Price of America's Testing Culture and What We Can Do to Change It
By Peter Sacks. A hard-hitting examination of the ways in which standardized tests sustain the privileged and punish the poor. We've been told that standardized tests aren't perfect but they're the best tool to make important decisions. Is this true? What are the flaws? And, what can we do to hold one another accountable to standards at all levels of schools and in the workplace? #0738204331 **$17.50**



The Teaching Gap: Best Ideas from the World's Teachers for Improving Education in the Classroom
By James W. Stigler and James Hiebert. A "best practices" for teachers – one that offers proof that how teachers teach is far more important than increased spending, state-of-the-art facilities, mandatory homework, or special education – and a plan for change that educators, teachers, and parents can implement together. #0684852748 **$23.00**

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Teaching as the Learning Profession: Handbook of Policy and Practice
Edited by Linda Darling-Hammond and Gary Sykes. The director of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future presents the first research-based view in more than a decade of the challenges and changes facing the teaching profession. Highlights innovations in teacher preparation, such as networks and other sustained forms of teacher-to-teacher learning. #0787943313 **$60.00**

Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools
By Jonathan Kozol. National Book Award-winning author Jonathan Kozol presents his shocking account of the American educational system in this stunning New York Times bestseller, which has sold more than 250,000 hardcover copies. #0060976098 **$14.00**

Learning by Heart
By Roland S. Barth. Funny, warm, and wise, Barth draws from a lifetime spent building schools rich in community, learning, and leading. His "conditions for learning" – which encourage high expectations, risk-taking, playfulness, inventive irreverence, and a lifelong love of learning – are the keys to making ordinary schools extraordinary. #0787955434 **$24.95**

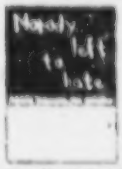
Teaching Sex: The Shaping of Adolescence in the 20th Century
By Jeffrey P. Moran. Sex education, since its advent at the dawn of the twentieth century, has provoked the hopes and fears of generations of parents, educators, politicians, and reformers. How did we come to expect the public schools to manage our children's sexuality? What is it about the adolescent that arouses so much anxiety among adults? *Teaching Sex* is a broad cultural inquiry into America's understanding of adolescence, sexual morality, and social reform. #0674002271X **$27.95**

NEW ITEM

Crossing Over to Canaan: The Journey of New Teachers in Diverse Classrooms
By Gloria Ladson-Billings. Teachers today face classrooms full of children who represent a wide range of cultures, often not only in their racial or ethnic makeup but also in language, religion, learning ability, and economic backgrounds. *Crossing Over to Canaan* details the struggles and triumphs of eight novice teachers in such diverse classrooms, showing how good teachers can use innovation and "teachable moments" to turn cultural differences into academic assets. #0787950017 **$24.95**

The Human Side of School Change: Reform, Resistance, and the Real-Life Problems of Innovation
By Robert Evans. Evans draws on an expert understanding of human behavior and organizational functioning to provide practical guidance on leading schools through the varied dimensions of change. Presents realistic advice on problem-solving, communication, and staff motivation, offering a range of leadership strategies for building trust, confidence and inspiration. #0787956112 **$21.95**

Radical Equations: Math Literacy and Civil Rights
By Robert P. Moses and Charles E. Cobb, Jr. Begun in 1982, the Algebra Project is transforming math education in 25 cities. Founded on the belief that math-science literacy is a prerequisite for full citizenship in society, the Project works with entire communities – parents, teachers, and especially students – to create a culture of literacy around algebra, a crucial stepping-stone to college math and opportunity. #0807031267 **$21.00**



Nobody Left to Hate: Teaching Compassion After Columbine
By Elliot Aronson. On April 20, 1999, the halls of Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, reverberated with the sound of gunshots as two students, highly armed and consumed with rage, killed 13 students and wounded 23 before turning the guns on themselves. Leading social psychologist Elliot Aronson argues that the negative atmosphere in our schools – the exclusion, taunting, humiliation, and bullying – may have contributed to the pathological behavior of the shooters. #0716741326 **$19.95**

VIDEOS

NEW ITEM

Educating for Understanding
By Project Zero at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. This comprehensive professional development program explores the development of learning in children, adults, and organizations. Through this video series and accompanying staff development guide, Project Zero staff provide an examination of how understanding can be viewed, taught, assessed, and deepened. Presenting with former Project Zero co-directors Dr. Howard Gardner and Dr. David Perkins are many senior researchers from Project Zero. Topics range from *The Mindful Classroom* to *Rubrics for Thinking and Understanding*. Eight Videos (approx. 40 to 75 min. each). #VPRZE-PX11 **$895.**

Reaching Standards Through Cooperative Learning
Featuring Dr. Spencer Kagan & Laura Kagan. These four videos examine how Cooperative Learning strategies are successfully implemented to assist diverse learners in developing competence in the four major content areas. Each video focuses on effective strategies for achieving the standards specific to that curricular area. The accompanying teachers' guides will provide support materials and sample lessons/exercises that relate to each video/subject area. #RSCL1 English/Language Arts, #RSCL2 Mathematics, #RSCL3 Social Studies, #RSCL4 Science. Approx. 30 min. each. **$148.00 each.** Entire series #RSCLK JSF0 **$489.**

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School Climate

STATE	STUDENT ENGAGEMENT: Percent of 8th graders in schools where a school-level official reports that ... absenteeism is not or is a minor problem (2000)	STUDENT ENGAGEMENT: tardiness is not or is a minor problem (2000)	STUDENT ENGAGEMENT: classroom misbehavior is not or is a minor problem (2000)	PARENT INVOLVEMENT: Percent of students in schools where a school-level official reports that ... lack of parent involvement is not a problem or is a minor problem (2000) 4th grade	lack of parent involvement 8th grade	more than half of parents participate in parent-teacher conferences (2000) 4th grade	more than half of parents 8th grade	SCHOOL SAFETY: State requires that school safety information be included on school report cards (2000)	State requires all schools to have crisis plans coordinated with local authorities (2000)
Alabama	80	77	71	65	50	60	46	✔	✔
Alaska	?	?	?	?	?	?	?		✔
Arizona	65	76	77	62	50	95	59	✔	✔
Arkansas	64	62	72	55	50	94	63	✔	
California	76	72	67	58	38	94	59	✔	✔
Colorado	?	?	?	?	?	?	?		✔
Connecticut	87	84	73	76	59	96	79		
Delaware	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	✔	
District of Columbia[1]	62	49	52	43	30	69	48		
Florida	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	✔	✔
Georgia	66	73	63	58	39	79	63		✔
Hawaii	71	58	40	45	24	95	37	✔	
Idaho	87	93	85	68	56	100	72		
Illinois	78	76	70	68	51	96	75		
Indiana	80	78	76	68	65	97	68	✔	✔
Iowa	?	?	?	72	?	100	?		
Kansas	90	88	83	67	64	100	89	✔	
Kentucky	65	76	64	55	42	72	46	✔	
Louisiana	58	66	48	46	38	70	47		✔
Maine	82	80	81	76	66	100	89		✔
Maryland	76	81	74	60	61	84	51		✔
Massachusetts	82	73	70	69	63	89	61		✔
Michigan	78	72	75	63	51	95	85		✔
Minnesota	77	81	72	75	56	99	88		✔
Mississippi	71	69	61	42	44	62	45		✔
Missouri	72	80	66	64	56	97	66	✔	
Montana	79	82	89	73	62	94	80		
Nebraska	84	80	84	67	63	100	90		✔
Nevada	73	74	69	62	50	98	35	✔	✔
New Hampshire	?	?	?	?	?	?	?		
New Jersey	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	✔	✔
New Mexico	53	67	71	52	35	95	49		✔
New York	90	81	69	60	52	87	65		✔
North Carolina	71	67	65	66	59	82	56		✔
North Dakota	82	80	79	79	76	99	94		
Ohio	85	82	79	49	57	87	61		✔
Oklahoma	76	64	76	60	53	87	45		
Oregon	61	67	71	65	59	100	87		
Pennsylvania	?	?	?	?	?	?	?		
Rhode Island	87	80	70	61	68	85	54	✔	✔
South Carolina	72	65	63	59	45	78	61		
South Dakota	?	?	?	?	?	?	?		
Tennessee	73	69	57	58	55	67	44	✔	✔
Texas	80	74	64	59	49	85	46	✔	
Utah	70	67	70	68	61	100	81		✔
Vermont	85	8[illegible]	70	70	60	97	78	✔	
Virginia	72	80	77	68	52	81	50	✔	
Washington	?	?	?	?	?	?	?		
West Virginia	75	81	68	64	57	57	33		✔
Wisconsin	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	✔	
Wyoming	73	65	63	71	53	100	84		
U.S.	77	72	66	63	50	90	57	19	26

? Indicates state did not participate in national assessment or survey.
[1]*Education Week* could not verify information for the District of Columbia on school crisis-management plans, class-size reduction, school construction capital outlay, or the assessment of school facilities.

SCHOOL SAFETY

Percent of students reporting that they feel very or moderately safe in school (2000)		Percent of students in schools where a school-level official reports that physical conflicts are a serious or a moderate problem (2000)		Percent of high school students who ...				STATE
4th graders	8th graders	4th grade	8th grade	felt too unsafe to go to school during the past 30 days (1999)	carried a weapon on school property during the past 30 days (1999)	were threatened or injured with a weapon on school property in the past year (1999)	were in a physical fight on school property in the past year (1999)	
92	88	3	9	5.2	9.6	7.5	13.5	Alabama
?	?	?	?	3.7	11.4	9.2	15.9	Alaska
92	87	13	10	?	?	?	?	Arizona
88	85	9	6	4.7	10.4	9.8	15.5	Arkansas
91	89	14	16	?	?	?	?	California
?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	Colorado
91	90	12	11	?	?	?	?	Connecticut
?	?	?	?	9.5	6.2	8.2	11.6	Delaware
88	82	24	15					District of Columbia[1]
?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	Florida
91	89	6	15	?	?	?	?	Georgia
93	88	13	45	11.4	6.0	6.7	11.5	Hawaii
90	88	19	8	?	?	?	?	Idaho
92	90	17	15	?	?	?	?	Illinois
92	90	8	7	?	?	?	?	Indiana
92	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	Iowa
93	89	7	5	?	?	?	?	Kansas
92	87	9	16	?	?	?	?	Kentucky
91	86	14	21	?	?	?	?	Louisiana
95	90	8	12	?	?	?	?	Maine
91	90	14	13	?	?	?	?	Maryland
95	91	5	4	6.4	7.3	8.6	13.8	Massachusetts
90	87	17	12	5.4	7.5	9.2	13.5	Michigan
94	92	19	8	?	?	?	?	Minnesota
90	85	15	13	5.3	7.0	8.1	13.9	Mississippi
90	87	9	11	5.5	8.5	8.9	10.9	Missouri
93	93	12	10	3.0	9.2	6.5	12.7	Montana
94	90	8	5	?	?	?	?	Nebraska
89	86	14	21	4.6	8.1	9.4	13.7	Nevada
?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	New Hampshire
?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	New Jersey
90	85	17	19	?	?	?	?	New Mexico
91	89	16	13	7.5	8.2	9.3	14.5	New York
92	89	5	19	?	?	?	?	North Carolina
92	93	9	8	2.9	7.5	8.0	10.0	North Dakota
90	89	13	9	8.5	5.6	8.1	12.2	Ohio
90	88	17	13	?	?	?	?	Oklahoma
93	91	10	4	?	?	?	?	Oregon
?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	Pennsylvania
93	91	9	13	?	?	?	?	Rhode Island
91	85	7	16	6.0	7.2	8.6	12.0	South Carolina
?	?	?	?	4.3	6.5	6.8	9.8	South Dakota
92	87	10	17	3.9	8.1	8.6	13.3	Tennessee
92	88	11	15	?	?	?	?	Texas
93	90	18	10	4.8	6.7	7.2	11.7	Utah
95	93	15	8	4.2	11.9	7.0	14.2	Vermont
90	88	4	13	?	?	?	?	Virginia
?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	Washington
92	87	4	7	4.4	9.8	7.7	13.1	West Virginia
?	?	?	?	3.7	5.5	7.6	11.3	Wisconsin
92	85	7	16	3.0	11.8	8.1	12.9	Wyoming
90	88	13	13	5.2	6.9	7.7	14.2	U.S.

School Climate

STATE	CHOICE AND AUTONOMY				CLASS SIZE		SCHOOL FACILITIES		
	State has public school open-enrollment program (2000)	State law allows charter schools (2000)	Strength of charter school law (2000)	Number of charter schools (2000)	State has implemented a class-size-reduction program and/or limits class size by statute (2000)	Average number of students per teacher in the state (2000)	State provides grants/ debt service for capital outlay or construction (2000)	State funding dedicated to capital outlay or construction for FY 2002 (2000)	State tracks condition of all school facilities (2000)
Alabama						15.3	✔	$110,000,000	✔
Alaska		✔	1.0	16		16.7	✔	$76,000,000	
Arizona	statewide	✔	4.0	437	✔	19.2	✔	$882,000,000	✔
Arkansas	limited	✔	1.0	7	✔	15.4	✔	$40,000,000	✔
California	limited	✔	3.0	350	✔	20.8	✔	$2,000,000,000	
Colorado	statewide	✔	3.0	88	✔	17.2			
Connecticut	limited	✔	2.0	16		13.2	✔	$500,000,000	✔
Delaware	statewide	✔	4.0	11	✔	15.3	✔	$102,900,000	✔
District of Columbia[1]		✔	4.0	42		15.8			
Florida	limited	✔	3.0	182	✔	18.2	✔	$423,000,000	✔
Georgia		✔	2.0	46	✔	15.4	✔	$201,000,000	✔
Hawaii		✔	1.0	22	✔	17.1	✔	$68,800,000	✔
Idaho	limited	✔	2.0	11		17.7	✔	$10,000,000	
Illinois		✔	2.0	28		15.9	✔	$740,000,000	✔
Indiana	limited	✔	4.0	0	✔	16.6	✔	$35,700,000	
Iowa	statewide				✔	14.5	✔	$10,000,000	
Kansas		✔	1.0	28		14.2	✔	$38,000,000	
Kentucky					✔	15.3	✔	$181,000,000	✔
Louisiana	limited	✔	2.0	26		14.8			
Maine	limited					12.6	✔	$5,200,000	✔
Maryland					✔	15.9	✔	$47,700,000	
Massachusetts	limited	✔	4.0	43	✔	12.4	✔	$372,000,000	
Michigan	limited	✔	4.0	188	✔	17.9			
Minnesota	statewide	✔	4.0	77	✔	15.1	✔	$263,000,000[2]	
Mississippi		✔	0.0	1		16.2	✔	$37,300,000[2]	
Missouri	limited	✔	3.0	21		14.0			✔
Montana					✔	15.1	✔	$4,000,000[3]	
Nebraska	statewide					13.7			
Nevada		✔	2.0	9	✔	19.1			
New Hampshire	limited	✔	2.0	0		15.0	✔	$24,500,000	
New Jersey	limited	✔	3.0	57	✔	13.3	✔	$2,000,000,000[4]	✔
New Mexico	limited	✔	3.0	21	✔	15.8	✔	$100,000,000	
New York	limited	✔	3.0	32	✔	13.6	✔	$1,400,000,000	✔
North Carolina		✔	3.0	96	✔	15.7	✔	$287,000,000	
North Dakota	limited					13.7			
Ohio	limited	✔	3.0	69	✔	16.1	✔	$536,000,000	✔
Oklahoma	statewide	✔	2.0	9	✔	14.9			✔
Oregon		✔	3.0	17		19.6			
Pennsylvania		✔	3.0	78		15.8	✔	$276,000,000	
Rhode Island		✔	1.0	6		14.0	✔	$33,200,000	✔
South Carolina		✔	2.0	9	✔	14.6	✔	$250,000,000	✔
South Dakota	statewide					13.8			
Tennessee	limited				✔	15.9	✔	$171,000,000	✔
Texas	limited	✔	3.0	219	✔	14.7	✔	$750,000,000	
Utah	statewide	✔	2.0	9	✔	22.1	✔	$38,000,000	✔
Vermont						11.9	✔	$11,500,000	
Virginia		✔	1.0	5	✔	13.8	✔	$126,000,000	
Washington	statewide				✔	19.7	✔	$197,000,000	
West Virginia	limited				✔	14.0	✔	$103,000,000	✔
Wisconsin	statewide	✔	3.0	95	✔	14.3	✔	$340,000,000	
Wyoming	limited	✔	2.0	0		13.0	✔	$58,000,000	✔
U.S.	—	38	—	2,371	31	16.0	40	$12,848,800,000	22

? Indicates state did not participate in national assessment or survey.
[1]*Education Week* could not verify information for the District of Columbia on school crisis-management plans, class-size reduction, school construction capital outlay, or the assessment of school facilities. [2]The amount listed is for fiscal year 2001. [3]Estimate based on projects approved as of November 2001.

Convention Stops

AASA
American Association of School Administrators
Feb. 15-17, 2002 • San Diego

NASSP
National Association of Secondary School Principals
March 1-4, 2002 • Atlanta

FETC
Florida Educational Technology Conference
March 6-8, 2002 • Orlando

ASCD
Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development
March 9-11, 2002 • San Antonio

NSTA
National Science Teachers Association
March 27-30, 2002 • San Diego

NSBA
National School Boards Association
April 6-8, 2002 • New Orleans

NAESP
National Association of Elementary School Principals
April 6-9, 2002 • San Antonio

NCTM
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
April 21-24, 2002 • Las Vegas

IRA
International Reading Association
April 28-May 2, 2002 • San Francisco

NECC
National Educational Computing Conference
June 17-19, 2002 • San Antonio

NEA
National Education Association
June 30-July 5, 2002 • Dallas

AFT
American Federation of Teachers
July 14-19, 2002 • Las Vegas

AASPA
American Association of School Personnel Administrators
Oct. 16-19, 2002 • Vancouver

CEFPI
Council of Educational Facility Planners International
Oct. 19-22, 2002 • Phoenix

ASBO
Association of School Business Officials International
Oct. 25-29, 2002 • Phoenix

NMSA
National Middle School Association
Oct. 31-Nov. 2, 2002 • Portland

NABSE
National Alliance of Black School Educators
Nov. 12-17, 2002 • Atlanta

NSBA
Technology + Learning Conference
Nov. 13-15, 2002 • Dallas

NSDC
National Staff Development Council
Dec. 7-11, 2002 • Boston

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Resources: Adequacy

STATE	Overall grade for adequacy		40% of grade: Education spending per student, adjusted for regional cost differences (2001)			40% of grade		15% of grade	5% of grade
			State average	Percent of U.S. average	Percent change from 2000	Percent of students in districts with per-pupil expenditures at or above the U.S. average[2] ($5,281)	Adequacy index[3] (1999)	Percent of total taxable resources spent on education (1999)	Average annual rate of change in expenditures per pupil, adjusted for inflation (1990-2000)
New Jersey	A	97	$9,362	132.3	1.8	99.9	100.00%	4.1	0.5%
Wyoming	A	97	$8,657	122.3	5.8	100.0	100.00%	4.1	0.8%
New York	A	96	$8,858	125.1	1.8	100.0	100.00%	3.7	0.4%
West Virginia	A	95	$8,444	119.3	5.7	94.6	99.94%	5.0	3.0%
Wisconsin	A	94	$8,744	123.5	5.2	98.9	99.95%	4.2	1.8%
Vermont	A	93	$8,622	121.8	7.7	68.9[4]	97.01%[4]	5.0	0.3%
Delaware	A-	91	$8,552	120.8	8.1	100.0	100.00%	2.6	1.4%
Michigan	A-	91	$7,922	111.9	4.8	94.0	99.80%	4.4	1.3%
Rhode Island	A-	91	$8,630	121.9	4.9	74.4	98.34%	3.8	1.5%
Indiana	A-	90	$8,296	117.2	7.0	76.9	98.77%	4.2	2.5%
Connecticut	A-	90	$8,804	124.4	4.3	98.9	99.99%	3.5	-0.2%
Maine	B+	89	$7,802	110.2	3.4	73.8	98.64%	4.6	1.3%
Minnesota	B+	89	$8,621	121.8	9.8	56.1	96.91%	3.7	2.1%
Pennsylvania	B+	87	$8,117	114.7	5.8	62.8	97.67%	3.8	0.3%
Iowa	B	86	$7,603	107.4	3.8	68.0	98.87%	3.9	1.5%
North Dakota	B	86	$8,983	126.9	11.0	30.1	91.10%	3.6	3.1%
Nebraska	B	85	$7,961	112.5	6.2	48.8	95.02%	3.8	0.9%
Oregon	B	85	$7,614	107.6	4.3	61.8	98.62%	3.4	0.9%
Maryland	B	85	$7,616	107.6	6.5	93.0	98.75%	3.7	-0.2%
Kansas	B	85	$7,591	107.2	6.6	52.0	97.08%	3.8	1.1%
Massachusetts	B-	82	$7,837	110.7	5.0	55.1	95.77%	3.1	1.3%
Kentucky	B-	82	$7,639	107.9	10.4	41.8	95.63%	3.4	3.3%
Georgia	B-	82	$6,955	98.2	1.8	63.2	98.14%	3.5	1.8%
South Carolina	B-	82	$7,275	102.8	9.7	35.8	95.10%	3.8	1.8%
Montana	B-	80	$7,032	99.3	3.2	35.8	90.55%	4.5	0.9%
Ohio	B-	80	$6,890	97.3	6.0	39.1	94.84%	3.7	0.7%
Hawaii	B-	80	$6,409	90.5	2.3	0.0	99.25%	2.9	1.3%
Virginia	C+	79	$6,965	98.4	1.8	40.3	95.37%	3.3	0.6%
South Dakota	C+	79	$7,157	101.1	9.1	22.5	92.73%	3.4	1.9%
Louisiana	C+	78	$6,695	94.6	3.8	13.3	94.45%	3.2	1.8%
Alaska	C+	77	$7,129	100.7	1.9	36.7	90.85%	4.2	-1.3%
Illinois	C+	77	$6,968	98.4	1.8	48.9	92.44%	3.2	1.6%
North Carolina	C	76	$6,570	92.8	6.7	34.1	95.21%	2.9	0.6%
New Hampshire	C	76	$6,967	98.4	3.3	38.9	91.47%	3.1	1.1%
Texas	C	76	$6,772	95.7	4.8	19.6	91.03%	3.4	1.8%
Alabama	C	76	$6,686	94.4	7.1	15.5	90.85%	3.5	2.9%
Washington	C	74	$6,256	88.4	1.8	25.2	92.30%	3.2	0.9%
Missouri	C	74	$6,323	89.3	6.0	26.0	91.67%	3.4	0.5%
Oklahoma	C	74	$6,591	93.1	0.2	11.9	86.84%	3.8	3.1%
Arkansas	C	73	$6,047	85.4	1.8	14.7	91.06%	3.6	1.9%
New Mexico	C	73	$6,956	98.3	11.4	9.5	84.10%	3.6	2.4%
Colorado	C	73	$6,173	87.2	1.2	36.7	93.29%	2.9	0.4%
Nevada	C-	72	$5,911	83.5	2.7	14.8	93.82%	2.9	0.8%
Florida	C-	71	$6,251	88.3	1.8	2.6	90.90%	3.4	-0.4%
Idaho	C-	70	$5,853	82.7	1.8	12.0	85.94%	3.9	3.1%
Tennessee	D+	69	$6,282	88.7	1.8	12.4	87.24%	2.7	2.3%
Mississippi	D+	67	$6,062	85.6	5.3	1.4	81.94%	3.4	2.6%
California	F	59	$5,603	79.1	1.8	1.7	78.66%	3.0	0.3%
Utah	F	57	$4,579	64.7	6.1	1.3	70.91%	3.6	1.9%
Arizona	F	55	$5,006	70.7	1.8	6.1	77.22%	3.2	-0.1%
District of Columbia	—[1]	—	$9,546	134.8	1.8	100.0	100.00%	—	-0.2%
U.S.	—	—	$7,079	100.0	3.9	41.6	92.28%	3.5	1.0%

NOTE: States are ranked by number grade to the nearest decimal.
[1]Because the District of Columbia does not have a state revenue source, it did not receive a grade for adequacy. [2]Figures adjusted to reflect regional cost differences and weighted for student needs. Students in poverty equal 1.2, and students in special education equal 2.3. [3]Data on special education used to adjust spending figures were missing for nearly 30 percent of the districts analyzed in Vermont.

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STATE	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Percent of students in districts with per-pupil expenditures[1] at or above ... (1999) National median ($5,083)	$6,000	$7,000	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Unadjusted education spending per student (2000)	Percent of annual education expenditure spent on instruction (1999)	Instructional dollars per student (1999)	Teachers as a percentage of total staff (1999)	Percent of education expenditures devoted to teachers (2000)
Alabama	23.6	1.9	0.0	$5,022	61.9	$3,210	54.9	48.4
Alaska	49.0	22.2	16.0	$8,543	56.5	$4,757	48.7	31.2
Arizona	7.0	1.2	0.1	$4,643	60.1	$2,806	49.7	38.2
Arkansas	29.0	6.7	0.0	$4,876	64.1	$3,176	52.5	43.5
California	2.4	0.5	0.1	$5,845	61.0	$3,539	53.9	39.2
Colorado	38.9	3.8	1.0	$5,749	58.2	$3,448	51.2	39.5
Connecticut	100.0	62.4	23.7	$9,321	63.5	$5,922	50.0	38.9
Delaware	100.0	54.6	0.0	$7,684	61.2	$4,716	54.7	38.2
District of Columbia	100.0	100.0	100.0	$10,252	45.3	$4,374	50.6	37.3
Florida	21.8	0.1	0.0	$5,750	58.6	$3,390	48.0	40.9
Georgia	74.6	10.3	0.8	$5,848	62.5	$3,810	49.3	35.3
Hawaii	100.0	0.0	0.0	$6,003	62.8	$3,818	60.7	44.7
Idaho	28.0	4.5	0.8	$4,889	61.9	$3,138	56.4	37.9
Illinois	55.8	14.0	6.9	$5,968	60.6	$4,097	51.1	42.9
Indiana	87.9	32.2	2.8	$6,689	62.5	$4,230	47.0	47.8
Iowa	87.9	12.1	0.9	$6,286	58.8	$3,671	50.8	35.2
Kansas	73.2	22.8	8.4	$5,938	57.5	$3,456	51.7	37.2
Kentucky	53.1	2.3	0.8	$5,970	61.7	$3,431	45.0	40.3
Louisiana	45.7	3.0	1.6	$5,408	60.4	$3,352	49.4	34.7
Maine	84.5	41.5	5.1	$6,881	67.3	$4,813	50.3	36.3
Maryland	95.4	25.0	0.0	$6,935	61.5	$4,504	54.5	40.2
Massachusetts	64.4	21.9	1.9	$7,910	66.6	$5,503	56.9	35.9
Michigan	97.8	57.6	13.3	$7,106	58.1	$4,320	45.6	41.8
Minnesota	69.5	25.1	1.2	$7,240	62.7	$4,259	53.6	36.4
Mississippi	3.2	0.0	0.0	$4,570	60.4	$2,755	48.0	33.6
Missouri	36.8	7.5	1.2	$5,387	61.6	$3,605	54.1	40.7
Montana	40.8	19.1	6.6	$5,953	62.5	$3,736	51.7	44.8
Nebraska	52.8	17.7	3.4	$6,170	62.9	$3,935	53.1	33.6
Nevada	14.8	1.9	0.6	$5,447	59.9	$3,346	57.5	38.7
New Hampshire	46.3	20.1	7.3	$6,746	65.2	$4,196	51.7	41.2
New Jersey	100.0	97.6	83.4	$9,986	59.9	$6,072	53.9	35.3
New Mexico	14.8	5.5	0.9	$5,450	56.8	$3,089	45.8	37.8
New York	100.0	98.6	33.4	$9,167	67.8	$6,335	49.4	33.9
North Carolina	51.9	3.2	0.1	$5,444	62.8	$3,553	51.6	39.8
North Dakota	34.2	10.8	1.8	$5,531	61.1	$3,325	53.9	45.9
Ohio	54.1	9.1	2.2	$6,221	59.0	$3,908	54.4	35.5
Oklahoma	16.8	4.4	1.3	$5,518	60.0	$3,183	56.2	39.7
Oregon	85.7	21.5	1.9	$6,361	59.2	$4,045	50.0	35
Pennsylvania	71.9	26.2	4.4	$7,599	63.4	$4,721	52.8	35.2
Rhode Island	80.5	27.1	0.0	$7,929	66.4	$5,503	61.6	36.8
South Carolina	46.8	4.4	0.6	$5,594	59.7	$3,375	53.2	41.6
South Dakota	38.8	10.0	3.1	$5,271	60.9	$3,202	53.8	40.2
Tennessee	15.7	0.6	0.0	$5,026	65.4	$3,350	54.0	37.9
Texas	29.9	5.8	1.7	$5,688	60.5	$3,440	51.1	45.8
Utah	1.3	1.1	0.2	$3,866	65.6	$2,762	54.3	42.4
Vermont	75.6[2]	44.8[2]	18.1[2]	$7,326	64.8	$4,675	48.7	39.2
Virginia	51.4	17.9	3.3	$6,850	60.8	$3,862	55.7	40.1
Washington	33.0	2.1	0.8	$6,049	59.8	$3,654	52.4	40.7
West Virginia	100.0	42.8	0.5	$7,456	62.0	$4,137	54.5	31.4
Wisconsin	99.7	79.2	16.1	$7,505	62.5	$4,706	55.3	30.1
Wyoming	100.0	54.7	12.8	$7,192	60.0	$4,106	49.8	33.2
U.S.	50.0	21.2	7.0	$6,408	61.7	$4,013	51.7	33.4

INTERPRETATION

Adequacy Index: This year, we introduce a new measure of adequacy to complement our existing indicators. In past years, our principal indicator of adequacy was the average spending per pupil (adjusted for regional cost differences). However, this figure falls short because it does not reflect how a state actually distributes spending for all its students. Consider this example: We conduct research that shows spending $7,000 per pupil will provide an adequate education. State A spends exactly $7,000 on every one of its students. State B spends $4,000 per pupil on half its student population and $10,000 on the other half. Both states' spending results in an average per-pupil expenditure of $7,000. But it's clear that only half of State B's students have received "adequate" funding.

While there is no consensus about how much money provides an "adequate" education, we know that districts with certain characteristics tend to need more aid. Specifically, districts containing more students with "special needs" require more money. The National Center for Education Statistics estimates that students in special education need 2.3 times as much funding as other students do. Also, students in poverty are presumed to need 1.2 times as much money.

After adjusting per-student-spending figures for each school district in the United States to reflect regional cost differences and student needs, we found that the average per-pupil expenditure in the nation for 1998 (the most recent data available at the district level) was about $5,281. We believe that amount to be a reasonable benchmark against which to gauge state spending.

While it may seem intuitive to measure adequacy simply by calculating the percent of students in districts where spending eclipses the national average, that calculation is not ideal. Imagine if every district in a state were to spend exactly $5,280 per student, just $1 below the national average. Every student would be amazingly close to what we consider to be an "adequate" figure, but we would declare that no students in the state were enrolled in districts with adequate funding.

Our adequacy index takes into account both the number (or percentage) of students enrolled in districts with "adequate" spending, and the degree to which students in districts where spending is below adequate fall short.

Each district where the per-pupil-spending figure (adjusted for student needs and cost differences) was equal to or exceeded the national average received a score of 1 times the number of students in the district. Districts where the adjusted spending per pupil was below the national average would receive a score equal to their per-pupil amount, divided by the national average, times the number of pupils in the district. The index is the sum of district scores divided by the total number of pupils in the state. If all districts' spending were above the U.S. average, they would receive a perfect index of 100 percent.

Example:

District	Enrollment	Per-pupil spending
1	400	$7,000
2	450	$6,000
3	500	$5,000
4	300	$4,000
5	350	$3,000
Total	2,000	

Districts 1 & 2 are the only districts providing an "adequate" education (i.e. equal to or above $5,281). The percent of students attending schools in districts with adequate spending then is 850 divided by 2,000 or 42.5%. Scores for these districts are equal to their student enrollment.

District	Score
1	450
2	400

Districts 1 through 3 are below the U.S. average, so assigning scores to each district will tell us how "far" they are from adequate spending. Their scores are equal to their average spending divided by the U.S. average, multiplied by the number of pupils in the district.

District	Score
3	473.40 = ($5,000 / $5,281) * 500
4	227.23 = ($4,000 / $5,281) * 300
5	198.83 = ($3,000 / $5,281) * 350
Total	1,749.46 (for all five districts)

Adequacy index = 1,749.46 / 2,000
= .8747 or 87.47%

Resources: Equity

STATE	Overall grade for equity		50% of grade: State equalization effort (1999)			25% of grade: Wealth-neutrality score[4] (1999)	12.5% of grade: McLoone Index[5] (1999)	12.5% of grade: Coefficient of variation[6] (1999)
			Overall score	Targeting score[3]	State share of funding			
Hawaii	A	100	97.4%	0.000[2]	97.4%	0.000[2]	100.00%[2]	0.0%[2]
Utah	B+	88	83.6%	-0.269	65.9%	-0.055	97.03%	12.1%
New Mexico	B+	88	84.3%	0.000	84.3%	0.004	96.89%	14.2%
Nevada	B	83	74.9%	-0.130	66.3%	-0.146	95.77%	9.1%
Florida	B	83	80.5%	-0.455	55.4%	0.054	94.95%	6.0%
Minnesota	B-	82	78.1%	-0.282	60.9%	0.007	92.57%	12.8%
Oklahoma	B-	82	74.0%	-0.135	65.2%	-0.041	94.36%	13.8%
Kansas	B-	80	75.2%	-0.139	66.0%	-0.064	92.53%	15.9%
Kentucky	C+	79	75.3%	-0.101	68.4%	0.032	93.59%	9.0%
Arkansas	C+	79	79.8%	-0.245	64.1%	0.094	95.40%	10.7%
Oregon	C+	79	73.7%	-0.194	61.7%	0.047	95.90%	11.9%
Louisiana	C+	79	67.9%	-0.175	57.8%	0.010	93.57%	9.0%
Texas	C+	78	67.2%	-0.475	45.6%	0.003	94.02%	13.9%
Wisconsin	C+	78	73.8%	-0.285	57.5%	0.049	92.83%	9.1%
Washington	C+	78	72.7%	-0.043	69.7%	0.056	93.90%	10.2%
California	C+	78	71.3%	-0.122[2]	63.5%	0.032[2]	94.27%	10.7%
Iowa	C+	77	57.5%	-0.108	51.9%	-0.063	95.61%	7.8%
West Virginia	C+	77	70.4%	-0.037	67.8%	0.074	93.93%	5.8%
Alabama	C+	77	71.3%	-0.052	67.7%	0.097	95.56%	8.6%
Idaho	C	76	78.3%	-0.178	66.5%	0.137	94.54%	14.5%
North Carolina	C	76	72.3%	-0.027	70.5%	0.102	93.99%	8.3%
South Carolina	C	76	68.4%	-0.199	57.0%	0.107	95.38%	9.4%
South Dakota	C	76	58.5%	-0.451	40.3%	-0.089	94.92%	12.8%
Alaska	C	75	71.0%	-0.013	70.0%	-0.175	91.86%	33.0%
Wyoming	C	75	56.6%	0.000	56.6%	-0.152	93.36%	13.0%
Mississippi	C	73	69.4%	-0.104	62.9%	0.146	92.56%	10.4%
Delaware	C-	72	69.1%	0.000	69.1%	0.095	88.34%	7.4%
Colorado	C-	72	63.9%	-0.427	44.8%	0.071	94.29%	11.4%
Georgia	C-	72	65.5%	-0.217	53.8%	0.145	93.82%	8.7%
Michigan	C-	72	70.2%	0.000	70.2%	0.136	91.49%	12.0%
Indiana	C-	71	60.4%	-0.138	53.1%	0.044	90.94%	10.1%
Maine	C-	71	61.8%	-0.330	46.5%	0.067	90.58%	12.9%
Vermont	C-	71	87.9%	-0.455[2]	60.4%	0.334[2]	86.56%[2]	19.2%[2]
Nebraska	D+	68	50.9%	-0.274	40.0%	-0.050	92.84%	13.4%
Virginia	D+	68	63.2%	-0.382	45.7%	0.173	93.56%	12.0%
Missouri	D+	67	56.7%	-0.109	51.1%	0.103	91.34%	14.7%
New York	D+	67	57.6%	-0.276	45.2%	0.148	93.83%	15.5%
Tennessee	D+	67	57.4%	-0.115	51.5%	0.103	90.91%	11.0%
Rhode Island	D+	67	61.9%	-0.405	44.1%	0.130	89.13%	10.2%
Massachusetts	D	66	55.2%	-0.235	44.7%	0.005	90.96%	15.1%
Arizona	D	65	58.4%	-0.176	49.6%	0.108	83.64%	13.0%
Connecticut	D	64	55.1%	-0.392	39.6%	0.098	94.64%	11.6%
New Jersey	D	64	48.5%	-0.170	41.4%	0.065	91.79%	11.7%
Maryland	D-	62	59.5%	-0.428	41.6%	0.245	91.77%	9.3%
Montana	D-	61	50.2%	0.000	50.2%	0.147	93.20%	16.7%
Ohio	D-	61	52.4%	-0.185	44.2%	0.138	91.83%	13.9%
Pennsylvania	D-	61	49.3%	-0.235	39.9%	0.130	91.38%	13.4%
North Dakota	F	58	44.1%	-0.029	42.0%	0.197	92.62%	16.5%
Illinois	F	57	42.0%	-0.077	39.1%	0.177	87.95%	14.8%
New Hampshire	F	56	14.2%	-0.558	9.1%	0.173	89.35%	18.2%
District of Columbia	—[1]	—	—	—	—	0.000[2]	100.00%[2]	0.0%[2]
U.S.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

NOTE: States are ranked by numbers (grade to the nearest decimal). [1] Because the District of Columbia does not have a state revenue source, it did not receive a grade for equity. The targeting score is derived using multiple regression analysis to determine the extent to which district property wealth influences state aid, controlling for other factors that influence state funding, including student enrollment, physical size of districts, and the number of students in low-income families or receiving special education. Hawaii has a single statewide district. [4] Data on property wealth used to compute state equalization effort, wealth neutrality score, and district foundation level were missing for about 20 percent of the districts analyzed in California. Data on special education used to adjust spending figures were missing for nearly 20 percent of the districts and one in Vermont. Figures adjusted to reflect regional cost differences and weighted for student needs. Students in poverty equal 1.2 and students in special education equal 2.3. [5] The District of Columbia is a single district.

STATE	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION				
	Restricted range[a] (1999)	Restricted-range ratio[a] (1999)	Average state funding per pupil[b] (1999)	Average state and local funding per pupil[b] (1999)	Implicit foundation level[c] (1999)
Alabama	$1,085	28.1%	$3,076	$4,541	$3,236
Alaska	$6,625	120.4%	$4,563	$6,515	$4,624
Arizona	$2,121	64.4%	$2,364	$4,763	$2,780
Arkansas	$1,816	48.8%	$2,867	$4,474	$3,568
California	$1,226	30.3%	$3,293	$5,183	$3,694
Colorado	$1,393	32.0%	$2,467	$5,512	$3,520
Connecticut	$2,811	44.1%	$3,224	$8,152	$4,490
Delaware	$1,466	26.8%	$4,697	$6,797	$4,697
District of Columbia	$0[f]	0.0%[f]	—	$7,276	—
Florida	$780	18.8%	$3,055	$5,519	$4,444
Georgia	$1,582	35.1%	$3,126	$5,808	$3,805
Hawaii	$0[g]	0.0%[g]	$5,332	$5,474	$5,332
Idaho	$1,889	53.1%	$3,034	$4,564	$3,573
Illinois	$4,057	104.0%	$2,381	$6,097	$2,564
Indiana	$1,726	37.9%	$3,412	$6,425	$3,883
Iowa	$1,150	26.2%	$2,953	$5,688	$3,273
Kansas	$2,744	69.9%	$3,781	$5,729	$4,307
Kentucky	$1,336	33.2%	$3,275	$4,789	$3,606
Louisiana	$1,252	31.5%	$2,576	$4,457	$3,028
Maine	$2,247	48.1%	$2,879	$6,195	$3,830
Maryland	$1,716	32.2%	$2,672	$6,420	$3,817
Massachusetts	$2,850	54.3%	$2,923	$6,543	$3,610
Michigan	$2,374	44.8%	$4,956	$7,062	$4,956
Minnesota	$2,318	50.7%	$3,874	$6,356	$4,967
Mississippi	$1,143	35.4%	$2,281	$3,627	$2,519
Missouri	$2,252	58.6%	$2,692	$5,264	$2,985
Montana	$2,983	80.8%	$2,362	$4,708	$2,362
Nebraska	$1,860	44.5%	$2,244	$5,612	$2,859
Nevada	$713	15.8%	$3,650	$5,506	$4,125
New Hampshire	$3,459	86.7%	$542	$5,960	$844
New Jersey	$3,707	50.5%	$4,180	$10,086	$4,690
New Mexico	$1,862	49.2%	$3,561	$4,222	$3,561
New York	$3,387	49.8%	$3,677	$8,142	$4,693
North Carolina	$1,089	25.8%	$3,727	$5,290	$3,826
North Dakota	$2,059	56.9%	$2,017	$4,702	$2,075
Ohio	$2,246	51.9%	$2,601	$5,880	$3,082
Oklahoma	$1,730	47.6%	$2,742	$4,206	$3,113
Oregon	$1,847	39.4%	$3,435	$5,565	$4,103
Pennsylvania	$2,292	47.1%	$2,687	$6,728	$3,320
Rhode Island	$1,999	37.7%	$2,912	$6,606	$4,090
South Carolina	$1,255	30.1%	$2,873	$5,040	$3,446
South Dakota	$1,891	52.1%	$1,905	$4,729	$2,765
Tennessee	$1,495	41.2%	$2,195	$4,262	$2,448
Texas	$1,918	49.2%	$2,298	$5,038	$3,388
Utah	$933	28.2%	$2,657	$4,034	$3,371
Vermont	$3,495[h]	79.2%[h]	$5,031[h]	$8,330[h]	$7,321[h]
Virginia	$1,426	31.7%	$2,625	$5,741	$3,629
Washington	$1,260	28.2%	$4,011	$5,755	$4,181
West Virginia	$922	19.6%	$3,633	$5,355	$3,769
Wisconsin	$1,722	32.4%	$3,877	$6,747	$4,981
Wyoming	$2,329	45.8%	$3,642	$6,433	$3,642
U.S.	—	—	—	—	—

INTERPRETATION

State equalization effort: States can help to equalize funding across districts in two ways: 1) by providing all or most of the share of total funding and/or 2) by targeting more state revenue to poorer districts that can't raise as much revenue locally. Most states use a combination of these techniques.

The *targeting score* is the elasticity of state funding relative to district wealth. It shows the degree to which the amount of aid districts receive from a state is related to the property wealth of the districts, controlling for the other independent variables (e.g., percent of children in poverty, percent of children in special education, enrollment, and land area) that may be related to the amount of revenue districts receive. A negative targeting score means that, on average, districts with less property wealth are receiving more revenue from the state.

State aid in Utah, for instance, accounts for 65.9 percent of total (state and local) revenue. Utah also has a targeting score of -.269, which means it targets more funds to property-poor districts. Therefore, its "effort" to equalize funding is higher than what the state share of funding would suggest.

State equalization effort = State share of funding x (1 - targeting score)
= 65.9 percent x (1 - (-.269))
= 83.6 percent

A state's *implicit foundation level* is the maximum amount of total funding the state's equalization policies would enable districts to spend for each student, assuming all districts made the same maximum effort, or simply, the state equalization effort expressed in dollars.

Implicit foundation level = Average state and local funding per pupil x state equalization effort
= $4,034 x 83.6 percent
= $3,371

Wealth-neutrality score: Like the targeting score, a wealth-neutrality score also shows the degree to which revenue is related to the property wealth of districts. However, this indicator considers both state and local revenue. West Virginia, for example, has a targeting score of -.037, which indicates the state is targeting more aid to poorer districts. However, when local revenue is considered, the state's wealth-neutrality score is .074, which means that higher property wealth still is linked to more revenue.

McLoone Index: This measure is based on the assumption that if all the pupils in the state were lined up according to the amount their districts spent on them, perfect equity would be achieved if every district spent at least as much as was spent on the pupil smack in the middle of the distribution.

The measure calculates the actual dollar amount needed to bring each pupil in the bottom half up to the midpoint in per-pupil expenditures. The index, then, is the amount of dollars spent by districts in the bottom half divided by the amount of dollars required to raise those districts up to the midpoint.

For instance, the median-level expenditure per pupil (adjusted to reflect student needs) in Alabama is approximately $4,226. The total amount spent on pupils who are below that mark is about $1.79 billion. In order to spend $4,226 on all those pupils, the state would need to spend $1.87 billion.

McLoone Index = Amount spent on pupils below the median/
Amount needed to be spent to achieve "equity"
= $1.79 billion / $1.87 billion
= 0.9556 or 95.56%

Coefficient of variation: The figures shown are the standard deviation of adjusted spending per pupil across all districts in a state (adjusted to reflect cost differences and student needs), divided by the states' average spending per pupil. The standard deviation is a measure of dispersion (i.e., how spread out spending levels are across a state's districts). For example, the standard deviation for spending in Florida is about $275. The average spending per-pupil figure for Florida is $4,609.

Coefficient of variation = $297 / $4,609
= 0.06 or 6.0 percent

Restricted range and restricted-range ratio: These are two other traditional measures of equity provided as additional information. The restricted range is simply the difference between spending levels at the 5th and 95th percentiles.

For instance, in Michigan, the spending per-pupil level at the 95th percentile is about $7,672. And the 5th percentile is $5,298.

Restricted range = Spending at the 95th percentile -
Spending at the 5th percentile
= $7,672 - $5,298
= $2,374

And the restricted-range ratio is the restricted range divided by the spending at the 5th percentile.

Restricted-range ratio = Restricted range / spending at the
5th percentile
= $2,374 / $5,298
= .448 or 44.8 percent

How *Education Week* Graded the States

Education Week compiled data on more than 80 indicators across five categories. We did not grade states in the student-achievement category because the presentation of the data is sufficient to gauge state performance. We did not grade the school climate category in this year's *Quality Counts* because the indicators in that section are being revised.

To arrive at a grade in each category, we assigned points to each column of data or information. For columns that contain information on state policies, we assigned letter grades based on whether the state had adopted such policies, and then granted points according to the following scale: An A was worth 100 points; a B, 85 points; a C, 75 points; a D, 65 points; and an F, 50 points.

For columns that contain numerical data, such as percentages, we assigned points based on one of two methods:

• If the benchmark for a perfect grade was 100, as in the column on the percent of teachers with degrees in the subjects they teach, we simply assigned the same number of points as the percentage.

• If the benchmark for an A was different from 100, we assigned letter grades based on a scale. For instance, states that spend 5 percent or more of their total taxable resources on education got an A, for 100 points.

After obtaining the number of points for each column, we calculated the overall grade for each state in each category using a formula that gives greater weight to certain topics. The formula for each category yields an overall number grade for each state, from 0 to 100. We then assigned overall letter grades based on the following scale: 93 to 100 percent = A; 90 to 92 percent = A-minus; 87 to 89 percent = B-plus; 83 to 86 percent = B; 80 to 82 percent = B-minus; 77 to 79 percent = C-plus; 73 to 76 percent = C; 70 to 72 percent = C-minus; 67 to 69 percent = D-plus; 63 to 66 percent = D; 60 to 62 percent = D-minus; below 60 percent = F.

Here, in greater detail, is how we graded the states in each category:

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Education Week ranked the states by the percent of students who scored at or above the "proficient" level on each of four National Assessment of Educational Progress exams.

STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Weighting: The first column, indicating the adoption of standards, counts for 18 percent of the grade. The four columns indicating whether the standards are clear and specific together count for 25 percent of the overall grade. The assessment columns count for 28 percent of the grade, and participation in the 2000 NAEP test counts for 2 percent of the grade. The five school accountability indicators together count for the remaining 30 percent of the state's grade.

Standards: In the first column, states that have adopted standards in the four core subjects—English, mathematics, science, and social studies—received an A. States that have adopted standards in three subjects received a B; two subjects, a C; and no standards, an F.

To grade the clarity and specificity of standards, we relied on data provided by the American Federation of Teachers. The AFT rated state standards in the four core subjects at each of three levels—elementary, middle, and high school—for a total of 12 separate ratings per state. To convert the ratings into a number grade, we divided the total number of ratings for which a state met the AFT's criteria by 12.

Assessments: States were given 1 point for each of five types of student-assessment instruments (multiple-choice, short-answer, extended-response English, extended-response other subject, and portfolio) used at each level—elementary, middle, and high school—for a possible total of 15 points. States earning 11 or more points received 100 percent in this section. States earning less than the 11-point benchmark were given a percentage based on the total points earned (i.e., 10 of 11= 91 percent, 9 of 11 = 82 percent, 8 of 11 = 73 percent, and so forth).

States were given 1 point for the use of an aligned criterion-referenced test in each of the four core subjects, again at each of three grade levels, for a possible total of 12 points. The total earned was divided by 12 to arrive at a percentage of the grade earned in this section.

States that participated in the 2000 National Assessment of Educational Progress received an A. Those that did not earned an F.

School Accountability: States earned an A for each component of a school accountability system that they had in place, and an F for each component that was lacking. The five components that were graded were report cards, ratings, assistance, rewards, and sanctions.

IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY

Weighting: The indicators for teacher assessment make up 35 percent of the total grade. Teaching in field is worth 30 percent. The three professional-support and -training indicators together are worth 20 percent of the grade. The three teacher-education indicators constitute the remaining 15 percent of a state's overall grade.

Teacher Assessment: States that require candidates for secondary school teaching positions to pass tests of subject knowledge and elementary-level candidates to pass subject-specific tests of teaching knowledge earned an A. Those that have only the former earned a B, and those that have only the latter earned a C. States that require prospective teachers only to pass a test of basic skills or general knowledge earned a D. And those that do not require any assessment for a teaching license received an F. This indicator counted for 40 percent of the "teacher assessment" subgrade.

States that require novice teachers to pass a state-administered portfolio assessment of classroom teaching ability for a second-stage license earned an A. States that base such performance assessments only on classroom observations or videotaped lessons received a B. States that do not administer centralized performance assessments, but do require new teachers to be evaluated by a local team of education professionals earned a C. All other states received an F. This indicator counts for 40 percent of the "teacher assessment" subgrade.

States earned an A for providing at least one incentive to teachers to earn certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, including waiving licensure regulations for those who hold such certification, providing financial support to those who seek it, or offering salary bonuses to those who earn it. States that offer no such incentives earned an F. This indicator accounts for 10 percent of the "teacher assessment" subgrade.

The number of teachers with national certification is included as ungraded information.

Teaching in Field: States earned the same number of points as their percentages of secondary school teachers with degrees in the subjects they teach. For example, if 81 percent of teachers held degrees in the subjects they teach, the state earned 81 points for this column. This indicator counts for two-thirds of the "teaching in subject" subgrade.

We defined "major" as either requiring a content major for certification or requiring at least 30 semester hours in one subject for certification. States that require all high school teachers to meet such standards for their initial certification area(s) earned an A. Several states require teachers to earn both a major and a minor, resulting in certification in two academic subjects, because such teachers may still teach in the subjects in which they have only minors, these states earned a B. States that required a minimum of only a minor in a particular subject area, or a minimum number of semester hours between 12 and 24, earned a C. We graded state requirements for middle school teachers on the same scale.

A number of states have given control over degree or coursework requirements to teacher-training programs in order to provide greater flexibility in how subject-knowledge requirements are met. States received an A if they discourage out-of-field teaching by: 1) requiring all middle school teachers to have subject-specific licenses in the fields they teach, and 2) by calling attention to out-of-field teaching either by notifying parents of the practice or by publishing out-of-field teaching data on school report cards. States that have one of those policies earned a B. States that have none received an F.

Professional Support and Training: States that require all beginning teachers to participate in an induction program and provide funds to support such programs received an A. Those that do not received an F. States that encourage or support ongoing professional development for all teachers by setting time aside for teachers to take part in activities or by providing money for professional development activities earned an A. States that do neither received an F.

Teacher Education: States that hold teacher-preparation programs accountable for their graduates' scores on licensure assessments earned an A. Those that do not received an F.

States that require a minimum of 12 weeks of student teaching during teacher preparation earned an A. For any requirement under 12 weeks, states earned a C. States with no minimum time requirements for student teaching received an F.

For "other kinds of clinical experiences," states that require teacher-preparation programs to provide trainees with a specified amount of time in the classroom prior to student teaching earned an A. States that have no such requirement received an F.

SCHOOL CLIMATE

Education Week did not grade states on school climate for *Quality Counts 2002*.

RESOURCES

Weighting: For "adequacy," education spending per student and the adequacy index each count for 40 percent of the overall grade; the percent of total taxable resources spent on education accounted for 15 percent, the average annual rate of change in per-pupil expenditures accounted for 5 percent. For "equity," the state equalization effort counts for 60 percent of the overall grade; the wealth-neutrality score, 25 percent, and the McLoone index and the coefficient of variation each count for 12.5 percent.

Adequacy: We adjusted each state's per-pupil expenditure (PPE) using the National Center for Education Statistics' geographic cost-of-education index. We computed each state's adjusted PPE as a percentage of the U.S. average ($7,079). We used 125 percent of the U.S. average as our benchmark for a perfect score, and divided each state's expenditure by 125 to calculate a grade for this indicator.

The *adequacy index* was calculated by *Education Week* researcher Greg F. Orlofsky using district-level spending (adjusted for regional cost differences and student needs). Each district where the per-pupil-spending figure (adjusted for student needs and cost differences) was equal to or exceeded the U.S. average ($5,281) received a score of 1 times the number of students in the district. Districts where the adjusted per-pupil spending figure was below the national average received a score equal to its per-pupil amount, divided by the U.S. average, times the number of pupils in the district. The index is the sum of district scores divided by the total number of pupils in the state. If all districts' spending were above the U.S. average, the state would receive a perfect index of 100 percent.

For the adequacy index, we used the following grading benchmarks: 100 percent is 100 points; 99 to 99.99 percent earned 92 points; 98 to 98.99 percent, 88 points; 96 to 97.99 percent, 85 points; 94 to 95.99 percent, 82 points; 92 to 93.99 percent, 78 points; 90 to 91.99 percent, 75 points; 88 to 89.99 percent, 72 points; 86 to 87.99 percent, 68 points; 83 to 84.99 percent, 65 points; 80 to 81.99 percent, 62 points, less than 80 percent, 50 points.

Education Week calculated the percent of total taxable resources spent on education by dividing the combination of a state's local- and state-level education revenues for 1998-99 by its gross state product for 1998. We used 5 percent of state wealth as our benchmark for a perfect score, and divided each state's percentage of state wealth spent on education by the benchmark to calculate a percent grade.

Education Week calculated the average annual rate of change in expenditures per pupil by subtracting each state's inflation-adjusted PPE, beginning with 1989, from the following year's inflation-adjusted PPE (1990) and dividing the difference by the base year (1989). This was done for all years up to 2000, and the figures were averaged together to produce an average rate of change from 1990-2000.

We gave 100 percent to states that had an average annual rate of change in per-pupil expenditures at or above inflation, and 50 percent to states that did not increase spending enough to keep up with inflation.

Equity: The *state equalization effort* was calculated using multiple-regression techniques by *Education Week* researcher Greg F. Orlofsky. The dependent variable in the model was adjusted state revenue per pupil. The variable was adjusted to reflect geographic cost differences relative to each state. The figure was also indexed so that the state's average per-pupil figure was 1. The independent variables in the model include aggregate value of residential-property wealth per pupil, percent of students in poverty, percent of children in special education (i.e., those with individualized education plans), size of enrollment, and land area per pupil (all indexed to the state average). The coefficient for the first independent variable (i.e., the index of adjusted state revenue per pupil) from the regression serves as the "targeting score." It tells the extent to which states are targeting money to property-poor districts while controlling for the other independent variables previously mentioned. The state equalization effort = (1 – targeting score).

For the state equalization effort, we used the following grading benchmarks: 93 percent or greater is 100 points; 90 to 92 percent earned 92 points; 87 to 89.9 percent, 88 points; 83 to 86.9 percent, 85 points, 80 to 82.9 percent, 82 points; 76 to 79.9 percent, 78 points; 72 to 75.9 percent, 75 points; 68 to 71.9 percent, 72 points, 64 to 67.9 percent, 68 points; 60 to 63.9 percent, 65 points; 56 to 59.9 percent, 62 points; less than 56 percent, 50 points.

The *wealth-neutrality score* was also calculated using multiple-regression techniques by *Education Week* researcher Greg F. Orlofsky. The dependent variable in the model was adjusted state and local revenue per pupil. The variable was adjusted to reflect both geographic cost differences relative to each state and student needs (i.e., poor students = 1.2, and special education students = 2.3). The figure was also indexed so that each state's average per-pupil figure was 1. The single independent variable in the model was aggregate value of residential-property wealth per pupil, also weighted to reflect cost differences and student needs and indexed to the state average. The coefficient for the independent variable (i.e., the index of adjusted state revenue per weighted pupil) from the regression serves as the wealth-neutrality score. It shows the extent to which total revenue (state and local) can be explained by property wealth. We used the following grading benchmarks: less than .020 is 100 points; .020 to .029 earned 92 points; .030 to .039, 88 points; .040 to .059, 85 points; .070 to .079, 82 points; .080 to .099, 78 points; .100 to .129, 75 points; .130 to .149, 72 points; .150 to .169, 68 points; .170 to .189, 65 points; .190 to .199, 62 points; .200 or greater, 50 points.

The *McLoone Index* was calculated by first computing the figure on median-level expenditure per pupil for each state (adjusted to reflect cost differences and student needs). Then, we computed the total number of dollars being spent on students whose per-pupil-expenditure figure was below the median. Next, we divided that figure by the total amount that would be spent if every pupil below the median had the median-level expenditure. We used the following grading benchmarks: 98 to 100 percent is 100 points; 97 to 97.99 percent earned 92 points; 96.5 to 96.99 percent, 88 points; 96 to 96.49 percent, 85 points; 94.5 to 94.99 percent, 82 points; 94 to 94.49 percent, 78 points; 93 to 93.99 percent, 75 points; 92.5 to 92.99 percent, 72 points; 92 to 92.49 percent, 68 points; 91 to 91.99 percent, 65 points; 90 to 90.99 percent, 62 points; less than 90 percent, 50 points.

The *coefficient of variation* was calculated by *Education Week* researcher Greg F. Orlofsky. The figures shown are each state's coefficient of variation, or the standard deviation of adjusted spending per pupil across all districts in a state (adjusted to reflect cost differences and student needs), divided by the state's average spending per pupil. We used the following grading benchmarks: 0 to 3.9 percent variation is 100 points; 4 to 4.9 percent variation earned 92 points; 5 to 5.9 percent variation, 88 points; 6 to 6.9 percent variation, 85 points; 9 to 9.9 percent variation, 82 points; 10 to 10.9 percent variation, 78 points; 11 to 12.9 percent variation, 75 points; 14 to 14.9 percent variation; 72 points; 15 to 15.9 percent variation, 68 points, 16 to 18.9 percent variation, 65 points; 19 to 19.9 percent variation, 62 points; 20 percent or greater variation, 50 points.

A detailed, step-by-step description of the adequacy index and all equity indicators is available on *Education Week*'s Web site at www.edweek.org.

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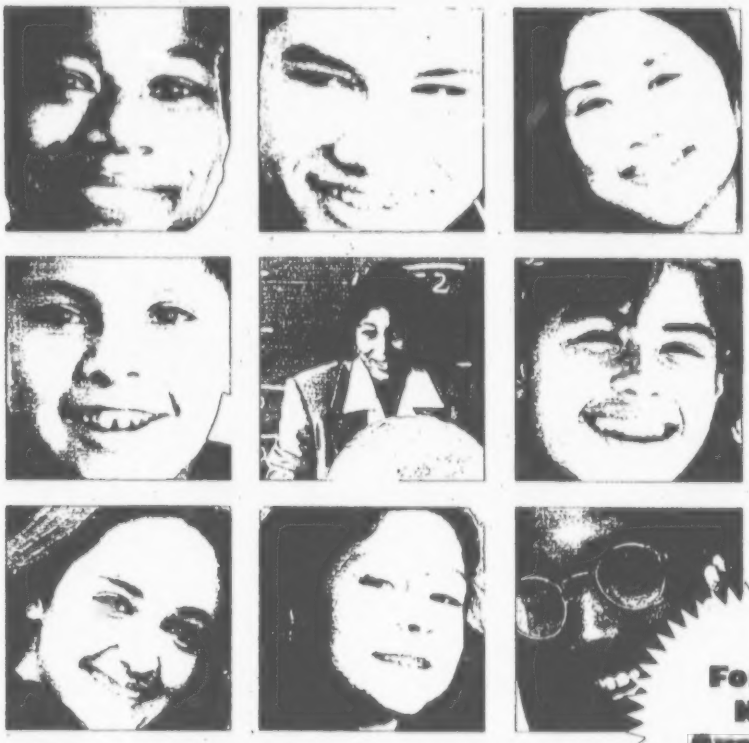

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State Policy Updates

Here are the sources for the vital statistics listed at the top of each state page:

Number of Public Schools (1999-2000): U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "Overview of Public Elementary and Secondary Schools and Districts: School Year 1999-2000," August 2001. This figure includes all public schools that provide educational services, have an administrator, receive public funds as a main means of support, and are operated by a local school district or other administrative agency.

Number of Teachers (2000-01): U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "Early Estimates of Public Elementary and Secondary Education Statistics: School Year 2000-2001," February 2001. The figure includes all professional staff members who provide instruction to students and maintain daily student-attendance figures for a group or class at any of the levels from prekindergarten through grade 12 and ungraded classes.

Pre-K-12 Enrollment (2000-01): U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "Early Estimates of Public Elementary and Secondary Education Statistics: School Year 2000-2001," February 2001. The figure includes students enrolled at a school or local education agency on the school day closest to Oct. 1, 2000. Membership includes all students in prekindergarten through grade 12 and ungraded classes.

Annual Pre-K-12 Expenditures (2000-01): U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "Early Estimates of Public Elementary and Secondary Education Statistics: School Year 2000-2001," February 2001. The figure represents "current expenditures," defined as funds spent for operating local public schools, including such items as salaries for teachers and other school employees, transportation costs, textbooks and classroom materials, and energy costs, but excluding spending on buildings and interest on school debt. The money could have come from any federal, state, or local source.

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Percent Students With Disabilities (1999-2000): U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, "Overview of Public Elementary and Secondary Schools and Districts: School Year 1999-2000," August 2001. The figure represents the proportion of students in each state who have an "individualized education plan," or IEP, as required under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

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Vital Statistics on U.S. Public Schools

- Total schools: 89,599
- Number of teachers: 3 million
- Total pre-K-12 enrollment: 47.2 million
- Annual pre-K-12 expenditures: $334 billion
- Percent minority students: 37.7 percent (17.7 million)
- Percent children in poverty: 18.7 percent (13.3 million)
- Percent students with disabilities: 12.4 percent (5.8 million)
- Children under 5: 19.2 million

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Alabama

1,367 Public schools	$4.3 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (all revenue sources)	24.9% Children in poverty
48,000 Public school teachers	38.3% Minority students	13.5% Students with disabilities
729,000 Pre-K-12 enrollment		296,000 Children under 5

A governor's panel created a blueprint for early-childhood education. But can the state afford to build it?

Early-childhood education has been getting a great deal of attention in Alabama recently, but the state has a long way to go if it hopes to play an active role in expanding access and improving quality.

That much is clear from an early-learning commission convened by Gov. Donald Siegelman.

"The state of Alabama (with help from federal, county, and city funds) takes full responsibility for the education of children from kindergarten through 12th grade and much of the responsibility for postsecondary education," the commission says in a report issued in July of last year. "It makes only a minimal contribution to the education and care of children before kindergarten, a time in a family's life when they are least able to pay for this important and expensive service."

The report, produced with broad input from state officials, the business community, caregivers, children's advocates, and other experts, provides 45 recommendations to improve the quality of early learning for Alabama children from birth to age 5 over the next decade, including providing statewide prekindergarten. The report also calls for salary supplements for child-care educators and a child-care rating system. The governor, a Democrat, has praised the report as providing a blueprint for Alabama.

If fully implemented, the wide-ranging plan, modeled largely on North Carolina's approach, would ultimately have an annual price tag of about $300 million. That comes up against a harsh fiscal reality in Alabama. Last year, a revenue shortfall caused the state to cut school budgets in midyear, and continued financial woes have raised the specter of more cuts this school year.

New Child-Care Standards

Some children's advocates in the state are pleased to see such high-profile attention being paid to early-childhood education. But mixed with encouragement about the report's sweeping recommendations is a dose of skepticism.

"It's not something that I look forward to seeing anytime soon," says Milly Cowles, a past president of the Alabama Association for Young Children.

Cowles points to another development that she says will provide more immediate benefits: the establishment of new and more stringent minimum standards for licensed child-care facilities, which took effect in January 2001. Among the changes are lowering child-to-staff ratios and increasing the education and training requirements for center directors, child-care workers, and teachers.

Church-based centers are generally exempt from the requirements. But beginning last Sept. 1, any church-based facility accepting state or federal subsidies had to certify that it was meeting the standards.

Gov. Siegelman has spent considerable time emphasizing the need to improve and expand early-childhood education, but not all of his efforts have succeeded. In 1999, he promoted a state lottery to help pay for education initiatives, with about one-third, or $50 million, to go toward setting up a statewide prekindergarten program. The lottery was rejected by Alabama voters in a referendum that year.

Siegelman created a Cabinet-level agency, the Alabama Department of Children's Affairs, in 1999 to better coordinate efforts affecting young children and to raise those issues' profile. Housed within that agency is an office of school readiness, which is now overseeing 43 pilot prekindergarten sites across the state financed with a mix of federal, state, local, and private money.

Pamela Baker, the commissioner of the children's affairs department, acknowledges that the lottery's defeat was a setback, but she suggests it has had some beneficial effects.

"Not having the money has forced us to form partnerships we might not have formed," she says.

Her department, she notes, has worked to bring together a range of interested parties: the business community, child-care providers, public school leaders, parents, and others.

Avoiding Education Cuts

On the K-12 front, the most pressing issue of the past year has been money. The state has faced revenue shortfalls that are putting the squeeze on both precollegiate and higher education. In spring 2001, both branches of education faced midyear state budget cuts of 6.2 percent. The governor and legislature cushioned the blow by agreeing on a plan to issue state bonds that will be paid off over the next 20 years, though schools and universities still received less than originally promised.

With the prospect looming of another round of midyear cuts this school year, Gov. Siegelman said he would call a special session of the legislature in late 2001 to find alternatives, such as closing business-tax loopholes.

"He will do everything imaginable to avoid cutting education again," said Rip Andrews, a spokesman for the governor.

Despite the financial straits, the Alabama Department of Education last summer sought to highlight what it saw as important strides in improving student achievement.

For the second year in a row, the department reported, total scores for public school students in all grades tested—3rd through 11th—were at or above the national average on the Stanford Achievement Test-9th Edition. Reading scores were just shy of the national average, at the 49th percentile.

The test scores are tied to the state's accountability system, which rates schools as being in academic "clear," "caution," or "alert" status. The state provides increasing help and ultimately intervenes in schools that remain in the "alert" category for at least three years.

Last summer, the state education department said all six schools that were facing academic intervention in the 2000-01 school year had made enough progress to be moved out of that category. This school year, the state is intervening in seven other schools.

Alabama's student-assessment system has seen some recent changes.

For one, the state board of education has approved tentative modifications to the system aimed at achieving a better balance of testing methods. The changes would increase the amount of criterion-referenced testing, in which students are rated on their attainment of a specific body of knowledge, instead of relying as heavily on norm-referenced tests, such as the Stanford-9, that score students on how they measure up against other test-takers.

—ERIK W. ROBELEN

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	14%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	16%
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	22%
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	22%
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	24%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	21%
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	17%
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	C+
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	D
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	C
Equity	C+

COMMENT: A state task force issued a blueprint last year for improving early childhood education from birth to age 5. But a revenue shortfall, which is putting the squeeze on both K-12 and higher education, may stymie implementation of the $300 million proposal. More immediate benefits may come from the state's decision to strengthen standards for child-care providers.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. † indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

Alaska

497 Public schools	$1.2 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (all revenue sources)	10.9% Children in poverty
8,100 Public school teachers	37.8% Minority students	13% Students with disabilities
136,000 Pre-K-12 enrollment		48,000 Children under 5

With limited state funding, educators strive to make the most of grants to expand early-childhood programs.

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	?
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	?
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	?
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	?
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	?
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	?
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	?
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	D+
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	D
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	C+
Equity	C

COMMENT: The state's system of early-childhood education largely begins and ends with kindergarten. Alaska will begin rating schools under a new accountability system in 2002. But while the state's science and math standards are "clear and specific," its English and social studies standards are not. After initial high failure rates, the state has delayed a requirement that students pass a test to graduate until the class of 2004. Lawmakers approved $76 million for school construction last year, in the wake of two court orders to improve rural school buildings.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. ? indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

"I think we're fairly unique in trying to bring together an inclusive model of early-childhood training for everyone."

CLAUDIA SHANLEY
Early Childhood Expert
Alaska Department of Education and Early Development

Alaska's system of early-childhood education begins and ends with kindergarten—but some educators are working to do more with the help of federal and state grants and local support.

The state provides kindergarten to all 5-year-olds whose families want to enroll them in public school classes. State-financed preschool for children age 3 and older is available only for children with disabilities.

But many schools offer much more than just kindergarten or limited preschools, says Claudia Shanley, who oversees early-childhood training for the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development. Some districts are using federal Title I money to expand preschools and offer other programs for young children.

In 1999, the state placed responsibility for early-childhood education with the same agency that oversees K-12 education. Today it offers professional-development courses to a broad range of people who work with young children, including Head Start workers and private child-care providers, Shanley says.

"I think we're fairly unique in trying to bring together an inclusive model of early-childhood training for everyone," she says.

The state has gone to work, with help from a federal grant obtained by the University of Alaska system, on training for child-care workers. About $2.3 million saved through welfare reform is also being used to help child-care providers seek training, educational toys, and equipment for use by children with disabilities.

Joy Lyon, the president of the Juneau-based Alaska Association for the Education of Young Children, says her organization is working to boost the number of licensed child-care providers and to provide more comprehensive training for child-care workers, especially those who work with children with disabilities.

Her group touts the availability of state and federal money to pay for workers' training and provide equipment, personnel, and instruction for child-care centers serving children with disabilities. Training is even offered on the state's public-television network and by mail for workers in the state's many remote communities.

Increase in Kindergarten

In the 60,000-student Anchorage district, which serves nearly half the students in the state, full-day kindergarten now is offered in 59 of the city's 60 elementary schools—a tremendous increase since only five years ago, when few of the city's schools offered all-day classes for 5-year-olds.

The state doesn't require kindergarten, but does provide the same funding for all-day kindergarten as it does for higher grades, says Julie K. Ginder, who supervises half the city's elementary schools.

Her city has emphasized the importance of early-childhood education in several ways. One effort, known as "delayed start," seems to be working well, despite its low cost. For the past three years, Anchorage kindergartners have started school a week after their older schoolmates; the first week is used for parent-teacher-child introductory meetings, teacher assessments of every child's skills, school tours, and the like.

Preschool is offered only for special education students, starting at age 3. Head Start and parent-outreach programs also are blossoming, and the district offers Montessori, language-immersion schools, and other creative programs for young children.

Head Start is provided in Anchorage, as well as 16 other locations both urban and rural, with the help of $5.7 million in state grants in 2000. The federal government, however, provides the majority of Head Start funding.

In rural Alaska, early-childhood offerings are limited in many cases by small enrollments, lack of local sources of money, and the limited capacity of small districts.

"Early-childhood [education] in rural Alaska is in a comparable position as our rural education programs," says Spike Jorgensen, the executive director of Citizens for the Educational Advancement of Alaska's Children, which represents many of the state's rural districts. His contention: The state simply doesn't provide enough money to educate the state's rural, and mostly Alaska Native, children.

Graduation Exams Delayed

Alaska's attention last year was focused on other issues. State leaders sounded the alarm when two-thirds of the state's 10th graders failed some portion of the new graduation exam—prompting Gov. Tony Knowles, a Democrat, and the Republican-controlled legislature to delay a graduation-exam requirement until the class of 2004.

Lawmakers dueled with the governor over education funding in 2001. Ultimately, they approved a $28 million increase for education, despite the governor's request for a $42.4 million increase. The overall education budget was $722.6 million. In addition, under court order, the legislature approved $76 million for rural school construction, enough to build three new rural schools, and renovate or draw plans for 29 others.

—ALAN RICHARD

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Arizona

1,552 Public schools	$4.3 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (all revenue sources)	26.1% Children in poverty
45,000 Public school teachers	45.9% Minority students	10.6% Students with disabilities
857,000 Pre-K-12 enrollment		382,000 Children under 5

Funding for early-childhood education remains flat, but state officials look for ways to improve quality.

It's been five years since Arizona folded spending for preschool education into a $20 million block grant for programs serving children from birth to age 8. In that time, early-education programs have seen no increase in state funding.

Not only has funding for the Early Childhood Block Grant remained flat, but state spending on prekindergarten programs, which serve 4-year-olds, also falls below what it was before the creation of the program in 1996.

"We certainly have not moved forward, and in some ways we've slipped backwards—at least in terms of state spending," argues Dana Naimark, the deputy director of the Arizona Children's Action Alliance, an advocacy group based in Phoenix.

Of the state's 227 local education agencies, only 54 public school districts and charter schools use the state-financed block grants to provide prekindergarten programs, for a total of roughly $10 million. About 3,600 children from low-income families are served in state-subsidized prekindergarten programs.

The remaining $10 million is given to districts to use for any combination of infant and toddler programs, full-day kindergarten, and supplemental programs and services for grades K-3.

"Originally, the dollars were earmarked specifically for pre-K programs, but once these dollars were placed into the block grant, it is now at the discretion of the school districts as to whether any money will be used for pre-K programs," says Karen Ortiz, the senior program associate for early-care education for the Action Alliance.

A majority of educational child care in Arizona is paid for with federal dollars, according to early-education advocates and state officials.

Karen Woodhouse, the director of early-childhood programs for the state education department, describes the state's spending on early-childhood education as stable, but acknowledges that "significantly higher amounts of federal funding for preschool programs are received from Head Start, Even Start, special education, and Title I."

The federal Child Care and Development Fund also helps support preschool programs because caregivers often offer a combination of child care and early-childhood education, she says.

Improvement Efforts

Despite stagnant state spending, efforts are afoot to improve early-childhood education in Arizona, education officials and advocacy groups say.

Under the auspices of Gov. Jane Dee Hull's division for children, the Head Start Advisory Council/State Collaboration Project is working to improve the array of early-childhood-education services and programs in the state, Woodhouse says.

A cross-section of interests that includes professionals in early care and education, children's advocates, state agency representatives, and private child-care organizations, the council has as its main goal the elimination of barriers to partnerships between the federal child-care program and caregivers.

The group, which meets every three months, also has a committee focused on improving the overall quality of care and education for young children.

Arizona already requires all state-financed preschool programs to be accredited by one of five national early-childhood organizations approved by the state board of education. The Arizona Department of Economic Security, the state's social services agency, pays a higher child-care subsidy to accredited providers.

But the quality and cost committee has called for higher subsidized child-care reimbursement rates and recommends streamlining the reimbursement process.

A second committee, focused on professional development, is exploring ways to increase training and compensation for workers in early child care and has developed a career ladder that identifies entry-level through advanced positions in early-childhood education, as well as criteria for approving trainers and training organizations.

"The state requires no training prior to becoming a child-care teacher, and only 12 hours of training annually once employed in the field," Ortiz of the Action Alliance says. Teacher turnover is a problem for early-childhood education, she adds, as is finding well-qualified candidates for teaching positions in early education.

"We can improve," Ortiz says, "but there's always a cost factor."

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	17%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	21%
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	22%
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	24%
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	22%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	28%
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	21%
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	C+
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	D
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	F
Equity	D

COMMENT: Arizona is trying to boost the education and pay of child-care workers, but hasn't raised spending for early learning since 1996. The future of Arizona's graduation test, which was scheduled to count for this year's seniors, is uncertain. For now, the requirement has been delayed until the class of 2006. The legislature has yet to respond to a court order to do more for students with limited English proficiency.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. ? indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

Funding Boost for K-12

While state spending on early-childhood education remains flat, Arizona's K-12 schools should receive a major funding boost, thanks to an initiative introduced by Gov. Hull, a Republican.

Arizona voters passed Proposition 301 in November 2000, instituting a 20-year increase of six-tenths of 1 percent in the state's 5 percent sales tax. Eighty percent of the new revenue goes to K-12 schools. The same law also mandates an automatic 2 percent annual increase for schools, which forced the legislature to provide an additional $66 million for education for each of the next two fiscal years.

Still, teachers objected to a provision in the new law that allows districts to choose how to spend a portion of the tax-increase money from a menu of options. Thousands of teachers staged sickouts across the state in spring 2001 and demanded the money be dedicated to pay increases and bonuses.

In addition, teachers and administrators clashed over a portion of the law that sets aside money for performance-based pay increases for teachers. Union heads called on the legislature for clarification, but lawmakers failed to take up the matter before ending last year's legislative session.

Sluggish Economy Spawns Deficit

One timeline legislators and state officials did take a keen interest in was the schedule for requiring students to pass a state test to graduate from high school.

Acting on the advice of new state schools Superintendent Jaime Molera, the Arizona board of education voted in late August to again postpone using the Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards, or AIMS, as a graduation hurdle. This time, the requirement was delayed until 2006 in all three subjects included in the standardized test: reading, writing, and mathematics.

Budget cuts, on the other hand, are unlikely to be delayed.

Facing a two-year budget deficit of up to $1.6 billion, the legislature was planning to hold a special session late last year to determine where the state could save money. While some legislators considered education to be off-limits for budget cuts, others believed that education spending would have to be slashed to help solve the state's financial problems. —DARCIA HARRIS BOWMAN

Arkansas

1,119 Public schools	$2.4 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (all revenue sources)	16.3% Children in poverty
29,000 Public school teachers	27.8% Minority students	11.9% Students with disabilities
448,000 Pre-K-12 enrollment		182,000 Children under 5

Aggressive lobbying by early-childhood advocates staves off deep cuts and results in increased spending.

Early-childhood advocates in Arkansas readied themselves for a tough fight in 2001 when state budget deficits moved the governor to propose major cuts in prekindergarten programs.

With state revenues sagging and $3,000 teacher raises the centerpiece of Gov. Mike Huckabee's legislative agenda, the state's program of early-childhood education—Arkansas Better Chance—faced $7 million in cuts over the next two years.

The program receives about $10 million annually in state funding and provides pre-K programs for children considered at risk of failing when they get to school. It hasn't seen a budget increase since 1992. Child-care workers, parents, teachers, and lawmakers rallied to fight the cuts. For two weeks, a group of more than 20 child-care advocates camped out at the state Capitol, urging the legislature not to slash the program. Phone calls poured into the governor's office and the state education department.

In the end, those efforts paid off for their proponents. The legislature passed a 3 percent tax on beer, with that money going toward the Arkansas Better Chance program and for subsidized child care. Aggressive lobbying by the child-care and early-education forces helped push the bill forward even as it faced some formidable corporate foes: Arkansas beer distributors, who pushed hard to have the bill defeated.

Against the backdrop of the budget battle, a state chancery court in May struck down Arkansas' school funding formula as unconstitutional. According to Kathy Stegall, a program administrator with the state's division of child care, as the legislature grapples with how to respond to that ruling, the successful campaign last year to save early-childhood funding helped put early childhood on the radar screen in a way it had not been in the past. The judge specifically mentioned in the school finance ruling that improving early-childhood education should be as high a priority as raising teacher salaries.

"The level of the conversation has accelerated," Stegall says. "Early-childhood programs are a part of that conversation."

The new beer tax, which will expire in 2003 unless reauthorized by lawmakers, will provide $2 million for Arkansas Better Chance, known as ABC, and $1.9 million for subsidized child care for families that are on waiting lists.

But that still falls far short of needs, advocates contend. The waiting list for subsidized child care has grown from 1,751 children in 1999 to 8,858 last year. The group Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families estimates that another $21 million in new aid will be needed to serve those families.

ABC provides childhood education for children from birth to age 5 in low-income families through both center-based programs and the Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters, or HIPPY.

A national program, HIPPY is a home-based initiative that helps parents provide educational enrichment for their preschool children ages 3 to 5. Parents follow a curriculum that focuses on language development and problem-solving.

In Arkansas, HIPPY programs are sponsored by a number of organizations, including school districts, educational cooperatives, and Head Start agencies. Most funding for HIPPY programs in the state comes from the Arkansas Better Chance grant program adopted by the legislature in 1991.

Pay Hike for Teachers

On another issue, a $3,000 increase in teacher salaries over the next two years passed the legislature last year. The pay hike is designed to help Arkansas begin catching up to other states, which have lured teachers away with higher salaries.

A legislative priority for Gov. Huckabee, the bill cleared the House unanimously and also sailed through the Senate.

And while the state's school funding formula has been struck down, the Arkansas Supreme Court on Sept. 6 granted the state's request for a delay in changing how Arkansas finances its public schools.

The ruling has galvanized state business leaders. They've supported the decision as a chance to improve an education system they say has contributed to an inadequately prepared workforce.

Arkansas also had an active year working on teacher-quality issues. Starting in January 2002, the state will move ahead with a new performance-based system of teacher licensure. Novice teachers will go through a mentoring program.

After the teachers complete the mentoring, their classroom techniques will be evaluated by a state-trained assessor. New legislation also now requires that report cards sent home to parents tell them the percentage of out-of-field teachers in the school and notify them when an uncertified teacher is in the classroom for more than 30 days.

Arkansas also supports teachers who are seeking national certification by paying for the application fee. Once teachers earn national certification, they are paid $2,000 annually by the state for the 10-year life of the credential.

"The ultimate goal is student achievement, and we know teaching is the single greatest determinant in student learning," says Donna Zornes, the coordinator for professional-quality enhancement with the Arkansas Department of Education. "We are trying to support and increase teacher expertise. We know this will help us retain teachers and increase their teaching ability." —JOHN GEWERTZ

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	13%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	14%
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	24%
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	23%
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	23%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	23%
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	13%
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	D+
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	B-
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	C
Equity	C+

COMMENT: A beer tax to support early learning could raise some $9.7 million a year. But on the K-12 front, legislators have yet to respond to a court order that declared the school finance system unconstitutional. The grade for accountability will likely improve when Arkansas begins rating schools in fall 2003. The state has overhauled its teacher policies, with a performance test, classroom observations, and an induction program for new teachers as of January 2002, bringing its grade from a C- last year to a B- this year. Lawmakers also gave teachers a $3,000 pay increase over two years.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. † indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

"The level of the conversation has accelerated. Early-childhood programs are a part of that conversation."

KATHY STEGALL
Program Administrator
Arkansas Division of Child Care

California

8,566 Public schools	$39 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures *(all revenue sources)*	23.3% Children in poverty
300,000 Public school teachers	61.8% Minority students	10.8% Students with disabilities
6.2 million Pre-K-12 enrollment		2.5 million Children under 5

A school-readiness initiative aimed mainly at high-need areas is being financed by a special cigarette tax.

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	15%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	18%
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	14%
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	15%
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	20%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	22%
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	20%
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	B
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	C
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	F
Equity	C+

COMMENT: The state has launched a comprehensive early-childhood initiative that includes standards and guidelines for child-care providers who are under contract with the state department of education, including family child-care homes. The state is one of only five that have "clear and specific" standards in all subjects. But the fate of a high school graduation test, now required for the class of 2004, is uncertain. The state has new induction standards for novice teachers.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. ? indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

"The problem is that there's so much need, and Prop 10 can't do it all. So it's important to focus and organize our work in an area where we think we can have some impact."

JANE I. HENDERSON
Executive Director
California Children and Families Commission

More than three years after state voters approved a cigarette tax to benefit programs for young children, California's system of early care and education is a study in contrasts.

On the one hand, California is a state with a 50-year history of support for child development, one where expenditures on such programs have grown significantly in recent years. On the other, California is a state where waiting lists for child-care subsidies for low-income families stretch hundreds of thousands long—even as legislators consider ways to reduce the costs of providing high-quality care.

And as the state's fiscal forecast grows bleaker following a recent energy crisis, the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the East Coast, and the national economic downturn, advocates for young children worry that funding woes may stall progress in improving early-childhood services.

"We are already an underfunded system," says Nancy Strohl, the executive director of the San Francisco-based Child Care Law Center. "But we have to keep investing in child development. For a child that's 2 or 3 years old, what doesn't happen for them now will never happen."

Yet even as economic realities threaten the development of the Golden State's system of education and care for young children, an active early-childhood community has much to boast about.

Proposition 10, the ballot initiative that imposed a new, 50-cent tax on cigarettes, has generated $1.8 billion worth of revenue for programs aimed at improving early-childhood health and education since its passage in November 1998. Eighty percent of the revenue is divided among county commissions established to oversee distribution of the money, while 20 percent goes to a state organization known as the California Children and Families Commission.

After an initial period in which the Proposition 10 panels scouted out the best use of the child-development aid at both the state and local levels, the state commission launched a school-readiness initiative last summer that focuses on programs for children and families in those communities served by the state's lowest-performing schools, as measured by results on state tests.

The state commission kicked off the initiative by providing $200 million in matching funds over four years. Local commissions can get the money by providing matching funds to set up school-readiness centers in the targeted neighborhoods that work to pull together and improve the delivery of early care and education, health and social services, parent education programs, and efforts to improve school capacity for high-quality instruction. The readiness initiative was initially conceived as a partnership between the state commission and Gov. Gray Davis, who first touted the initiative during his State of the State Address in January 2001. But the commission's hopes that the program would be supplemented by state general-revenue dollars were dashed as California's economic circumstances worsened.

Even without state aid, the readiness initiative sets a well-defined target for Proposition 10 dollars, says Jane I. Henderson, the executive director of the state's children and families commission.

"The problem is that there's so much need, and Prop 10 can't do it all," says Henderson. "So it's important to focus and organize our work in an area where we think we can have some impact."

Roots in World War II

California's support for child development dates back to the 1940s, after Congress passed the Lanham Act, which provided federal funds for child-care facilities to help put women in the workforce during World War II. After the federal aid disappeared with the end of the war in 1945, California picked up where the U.S. government had left off, by creating a state child-development infrastructure long before most other states did.

The legislature has poured money into that infrastructure in recent years, boosting annual spending on state-financed preschool programs for children from low-income families by $93.6 million—for a total of $295 million—since Davis took office in 1999.

The state has leveraged funding through the federal Child Care and Development Fund and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families programs, in addition to earmarking its own general-fund money, to provide child-care subsidies to low-income families. In fiscal 2002, the state is providing nearly $1.2 billion for all of its child-care and preschool programs—nearly double the $621 million it spent just four years ago.

In 2000, state officials gave child-care and preschool providers new guidelines to go with the new funds when they issued standards detailing what children should know and be able to do before they enter kindergarten. The standards cover areas from motor development to skills in reading and mathematics.

An August 2001 report by Policy Analysis for California Education, or PACE, a research institute at the University of California, Berkeley, and Stanford University, found that the increased state and federal spending had improved quality at the state's child-care centers and preschool programs serving children from low-income families. Child-care centers receiving state subsidies reported smaller class sizes, better staff-to-child ratios, and higher staff educational levels than cen-

ters unable to tap state subsidies.

Despite such successes, the need for high-quality child care for low-income families in California far outpaces the supply. Roughly 300,000 qualified children remain on waiting lists for state-subsidized child care—many of whom are from families that have never received public assistance. Former welfare recipients, as well as the state's poorest families, have priority over others under state eligibility requirements.

Davis, faced with a rapidly rising demand for child-care assistance as a new tide of former welfare recipients enters the workforce, has pressed lawmakers to find ways to contain state spending on child care. The Democratic governor last August vetoed $44 million in state child-care support for families that have been off direct public assistance for two years. He vowed to restore $24 million of the money if the legislature identified cost-cutting measures and other changes to the system.

Unless the funds are replenished, Henderson says, subsidies for some former welfare recipients will run out by February of this year.

"The governor is saying it isn't fair that [former welfare recipients] get better access to child care than the regular working poor not on welfare," says Patty Siegel, the executive director of the California Child Care Resource and Referral Network. "We're saying that we can't arbitrarily cut them off and say that they now have to pay the full cost of care. We're being asked to figure out how we can do more with less."

Legislation on drawing up a master plan for early-childhood care and education, similar to the state's master plan for higher education, has also been put on hold as reforms to the child-care system are considered.

Meanwhile, at the K-12 level, lawmakers in 2001 approved several programs designed to streamline and improve the state's testing and accountability program, even as they wrestled with fiscal problems.

Among the big-ticket items, Gov. Davis approved a $200 million program of grants to schools performing at the lowest levels on state tests. The grants can be applied toward such purposes as lower class sizes, outreach efforts to parents, and greater staff development.

'Filling in Gaps'

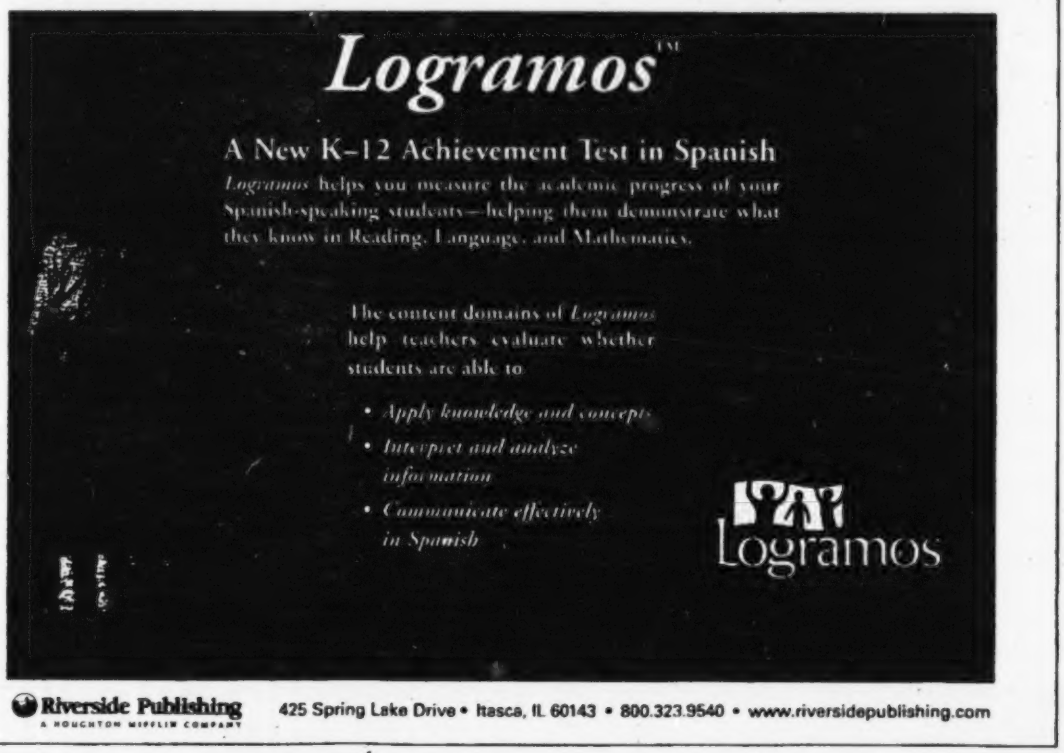
Lawmakers also sought to improve staff training statewide, earmarking $80 million to launch a three-year, standards-based training program for English and math teachers. Another $15 million will be used for training principals and vice principals, providing five days of additional training each year focused on instructional leadership and management issues.

"We are realizing the benefits of the improvement efforts we have made over the past couple of years," says California Secretary of Education Kerry Mazzoni. "We are building on those and filling in the gaps."

Not all measures tied to enhancing standards-based instruction received approval, though. Citing his concerns over the state's growing budget shortfall, Davis vetoed a bill that would have guaranteed schools $250 million a year over the next three years to buy standards-based curriculum materials. The governor also signaled that the state's sliding economy could make balancing the budget even harder this spring. In October, he asked the heads of all state agencies—including the department of education—to identify cuts of 15 percent in their budget proposals for fiscal 2003.

The state board of education has also been granted power to delay the requirement that students in the class of 2004 pass a new high school exit exam to graduate. Under the new law, the state board can postpone the requirement before Aug. 1, 2003, if, after the completion of an independent study, policymakers conclude that students haven't been taught the material they will be tested on.

–JESSICA L. SANDHAM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Colorado

1,561 Public schools	$4.4 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (all revenue sources)	13.4% Children in poverty
42,000 Public school teachers	30.5% Minority students	10.2% Students with disabilities
725,000 Pre-K-12 enrollment		298,000 Children under 5

From tax credits to experimental programs, the state vigorously supports early learning in numerous ways.

In 18 Colorado communities, educators and caregivers are experimenting with the future of early-childhood education.

Those communities are home to the Consolidated Child Care Pilot Program, a 5-year-old initiative that involves the bundling of various government funding sources for early-childhood services and waivers from the normal rules for running such programs.

"We said to these communities, 'Take a look at what you can do to develop high-quality child-care systems,' " says Sharon Triolo-Moloney, the program's supervisor in the Colorado Department of Education. "We have several communities that have done an outstanding job of bringing people together."

"The overall purpose is to demonstrate what a high-quality early-childhood system looks like," she says. "What does it actually cost? What do you get for the dollars invested? What are the outcomes?"

In Mesa County, with a population of 115,000 and located near the Utah border on Colorado's Western Slope, supporters call the pilot program a big success.

"I think it was an incredible idea," says Jackie Howard, the coordinator of early-childhood education for the 19,500-student Mesa School District No. 51, the largest of three districts in the county. "It is touching the lives of a lot of little kids who deserve the very best."

The pilot program was enacted in 1997 for 12 communities and expanded to 18 two years later.

But the program is just one of several examples in Colorado of collaboration between a variety of government agencies and private organizations to improve early-childhood education.

For example, the Colorado Preschool Program was established by the legislature in 1988 with the strong backing of the state's business community. Designed for 4- and 5-year-olds who lack the readiness for school, the program now serves about 10,000 children. State officials acknowledge that many more youngsters would benefit but cannot be served because of budgetary limitations.

A newer program, approved by the legislature last year, set up a five-year pilot program of full-day kindergarten in 17 of the state's poorest-performing schools. Like most states, Colorado does not mandate that districts provide full-day kindergarten, and only a handful of districts do.

The kindergarten program provides $2.8 million a year over five years to run full-day programs in schools that received "unsatisfactory" performance ratings under the state's accountability system.

Education has been a centerpiece of Republican Gov. Bill Owens' agenda since he took office in 1999. But some observers quietly suggest that when it comes to early-childhood education, the governor has not matched the commitment of his Democratic predecessor, Roy W. Romer. Now the superintendent of the Los Angeles schools, Romer was a strong proponent of child care and other early-childhood efforts during his 12 years as governor.

Still, the profile of early-childhood issues in the state has remained relatively high. In 2000, the legislature formed the Colorado Child Care Commission, a body made up of legislators and appointees of the governor, with a goal of better-coordinated policy and legislation.

The state is implementing a voluntary credentialing program for child-care providers based on child-care standards, as well as a loan-forgiveness program for those who obtain an associate's degree in child care, says Bruce N. Atchison, the vice president of policy and programs for the Colorado Children's Campaign, an advocacy group.

In addition, Colorado provides state income-tax credits to parents for child-care expenses. "It's not just families in poverty and the working poor who are struggling with the issue of finding quality child care," Atchison notes.

A big issue for children's advocates in this year's legislative session, he adds, will be strengthening the work of the Consolidated Child Care Pilot Program and perhaps allowing other communities to begin having the same flexibility to bypass regulations and develop innovative programs.

In Mesa County, advocates for early-childhood education applied for the pilot program in the first round, but their application did not get selected until the program was expanded in 1999.

The pilot has brought together officials from the county's three districts with Head Start program leaders, county health and human services officials, providers of early-childhood services, and others interested in child care.

Under the program, participants are able to seek waivers of state rules that may stand in the way of better services for children. Thanks to one such waiver, Mesa County was able to change income criteria to ensure that several families just over the edge of the poverty line could remain eligible for child-care benefits.

The state program provides just $10,000 a year in seed money. Mesa County has also successfully applied for as much as $90,000 in other state aid under the pilot for such purposes as an early-childhood coordinator's position, staff development, and the establishment of a substitute pool for child-care providers.

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	?
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	?
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	?
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	?
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	34%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	30%
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	27%
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	B+
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	C
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	C
Equity	C-

COMMENT: An amendment to the state constitution in 2000 is funneling new money to public education, including a pilot program to provide full-day kindergarten in 17 schools. Officials are trying to stretch early-learning dollars further through a pilot project to improve service in 18 communities. Colorado now receives credit for having sanctions for low-performing schools. The state can take over such schools and convert them to charters, and it provides free transportation for students who want to transfer out of low-performing schools.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. ? indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

Accountability Reports

Education lobbyists were generally pleased with the 2001 session of the Colorado legislature.

One of the biggest developments was a change in the school accountability program from a system of letter grades, adopted by the 2000 legislature but never put in place, to a system of verbal descriptions of how schools are performing.

Last summer, public schools still got their first report cards. But instead of grades A through F, they received one of these labels: "excellent," "high," "average," "low," or "unsatisfactory."

The report cards, now called accountability reports, are based on scores on the Colorado School Assessment Program. Many education groups have fought any form of grading for schools, arguing that poor-performing schools would be labeled failures. The switch to the verbal descriptions in 2001 was viewed by many lobbyists as a sign that Gov. Owens was willing to compromise on key education issues.

Another reason educators were upbeat last year was that the state had more money for schools.

In November 2000, Colorado voters approved a state constitutional amendment that requires increased spending on education over the next decade. Lawmakers reached fairly easy agreement on the implementation of the measure, known as Amendment 23. In addition to the pilot program for full-day kindergarten, the new money went for general increases in the school funding formula, for new textbooks, and for charter school construction.

On another issue, Colorado legislators got nationwide attention for their debate and passage of a bill that requires school districts to adopt policies against bullying. Amid reminders of the 1999 violence at Columbine High School in Jefferson County, Colo., which some have blamed in part on verbal mistreatment of the two student gunmen, the measure passed overwhelmingly. —MARK WALSH

Connecticut

1,073 Public schools	$5.7 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (all revenue sources)	11.7% Children in poverty
43,000 Public school teachers	29.5% Minority students	13.5% Students with disabilities
562,000 Pre-K-12 enrollment		223,000 Children under 5

After a strong start, the state's efforts in early-childhood education have leveled off.

Connecticut has been credited with making a strong start in ensuring that more of its youngsters begin school ready to learn. But recently those efforts have leveled off, long before reaching the majority of children who could benefit from them.

The Connecticut Department of Social Services provides subsidies to low-income parents to help them pay for child care in a wide range of settings, including group centers run out of private homes, "kith and kin" care provided by family members, and after-school programs. Children up to age 13 are eligible, but the bulk of those served are of preschool or elementary school age.

Although the payment rates for the subsidies have not changed in 10 years, state officials say they plan to unveil new rates early this year.

In fiscal 2000-01, Connecticut paid out $104 million in such subsidies, enough to assist more than 28,000 children. The state footed about $57 million of the bill itself, and used federal child-care and welfare funds for the rest.

Federal and state dollars also were combined—almost one-to-one—to provide $25 million in direct aid to a network of some 100 child-care centers, which together serve nearly 5,000 children.

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	32%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	34%
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	35%
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	35%
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	46%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	42%
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	44%
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	B-
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	B+
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	A-
Equity	D

CONTENT: In 1997, the state began a major school-readiness effort, including money for preschool and full-day kindergarten in its poorest districts and a career-development system for early-childhood teachers. But financing has plateaued. The state no longer receives credit for school rewards because they are provided at the district rather than school level. Its high school English standards and middle school social studies standards are now considered "clear and specific." Districts have until fall 2002 to spell out the skills students need for a diploma.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. † indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

> "It's not just a voucher to take where you want to, but something that the state can stand behind and say, 'This is a quality program.'"
>
> PEG OLIVEIRA
> Policy Fellow
> Connecticut Voices for Children

School-Readiness Measure

The state embarked on another major early-childhood-education effort in 1997, a year after the Connecticut Supreme Court ruled in *Sheff* v. *O'Neill* that action must be taken to better integrate Connecticut's schools.

In part to address inequities cited in the desegregation case, lawmakers passed a school-readiness measure aimed at giving the state's neediest children a leg up on their education.

The initiative gives grants to preschool-service providers to expand existing programs and start new ones in low-income communities, with the purpose of increasing the number of spaces available to families. The grants target programs for 3- and 4-year olds, and must be used to tend to children's cognitive development, as well as to offer nutrition services, parenting education, and referrals to health-care services.

"This ensures that it's not just a voucher to take where you want to, but something that the state can stand behind and say, 'This is a quality program,' " says Peg Oliveira, a policy fellow at Connecticut Voices for Children, an advocacy group.

The state money is divvied up through local School Readiness Councils, and possible grantees include public schools, for-profit child-care operations, and centers serving children in the federally financed Head Start program.

As a result of the grants, early-childhood-education programs are being provided for free, or at a significant discount, for about 7,000 children who otherwise would not have access to them. About three-quarters of the spaces are for full-day, full-year services. Subsidized at $37.2 million for fiscal 2002, most of the school-readiness grants have been directed at communities served by the state's 17 "priority districts"—Connecticut's designation for its largest and most impoverished school systems.

Full-day kindergarten also has been expanded through separate, supplemental aid that the state gives to poor districts and through a grant program Connecticut established in 1998 to boost the reading skills of young children. The state's three largest districts—Bridgeport, Hartford, and New Haven—now offer full-day kindergarten to all eligible children.

Along with the money for expanding access, about $1.93 million a year has been allocated for school-readiness councils to disburse as "quality enhancement" grants to help participating providers improve their programs.

In 1997, Connecticut also created a series of initiatives through which child-care and early-childhood-education providers can borrow money for facilities upgrades at vastly discounted rates. Together, those programs have helped finance more than $50 million in infrastructure improvements. By now, however, the state has spent down nearly all the money originally set aside for the efforts, and more would need to be allocated to finance additional construction.

'A Stalled Offensive'

The state's community college system also has been given the charge of helping to improve the quality of early-childhood education by administering a program called Connecticut Charts-A-Course. Subsidized by the state at $1.6 million, the initiative provides training, scholarships, and professional development to child-care workers, and it offers technical and financial assistance to child-care programs working toward accreditation. Within three years of first receiving school-readiness funds, programs must become accredited through the National Association for the Education of Young Children or a similar process. Other standards-setting efforts include the state's "Preschool Curricular Goals and Benchmarks" document, which describes the skills that should be developed in young children.

But financing for many of those initiatives has plateaued. The first-year allocation for expanding access to school-readiness programs doubled between 1998 and 2000, from $20 million to $40 mil-

lion. It has not budged since, despite calls last year by state education leaders for a large infusion of new money. The line item for quality-enhancement grants has similarly remained steady.

"This is a stalled offensive," says David Nee, the executive director of the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund, a Hamden, Conn.-based philanthropy that focuses largely on early-childhood issues. "After industrial-scale investment in the first two years, there's been a nibbling around the edges."

The state education department estimates that nearly 15,000 more children in Connecticut's eligible low-income communities would likely take advantage of school-readiness services if enough spaces were available. In other words, with fewer than 7,000 children now served, the state still isn't even halfway toward addressing its unmet need.

While some advocates have hoped for additional money to expand access, another push has been under way to boost the salaries of those who work in early-childhood education. Low wages have been blamed for high staff turnover in the field, and some worry the situation will worsen as Connecticut raises the standards for the profession. In 2003, the state plans to begin requiring that teachers in programs accepting school-readiness money obtain a minimum of nine college credits in child development or early-childhood education, in addition to a Child Development Associate credential already mandated. (Connecticut licensing rules also mandate that head teachers in early-childhood education have a CDA, whether or not they work in a program receiving school-readiness funds.)

A broad coalition of Connecticut labor and family groups lobbied last year for a $2 million plan that would guarantee a "living wage" for preschool educators and create a career-ladder program to reward those with additional credentials with higher salaries. But while the legislature approved the plan in concept, the measure it passed included no new money for implementation.

Graduation Requirement Added

Indeed, significant funding for new education programs was not in the cards in 2001, when protracted wrangling over a state spending plan forced lawmakers to extend their session into the final days of the fiscal year. Facing a slowing economy, budget negotiators also had to contend with a pair of legislated caps on overall state spending and state aid to local school systems. The biennial budget they finally approved adds $100 million this year to the $1.84 billion that the state allocated for precollegiate education for fiscal 2000-01, and it upped the ante another $80 million for the 2002-03 fiscal year.

A number of proposed initiatives fell victim to the last-minute haggling, including a plan to improve teacher recruitment. Among other provisions, the proposal would have offered college-loan forgiveness to new teachers, while expanding a teacher-licensure program meant to recruit nontraditional candidates into the profession. One significant proposal that did survive the session was a new graduation requirement. Lawmakers gave the state's 166 districts until fall 2002 to spell out the skills students need to demonstrate to earn a high school diploma. The bill was offered as a compromise to some lawmakers who felt Connecticut needed a statewide exit exam to determine who graduates and who doesn't. By allowing school systems to set their own requirements, proponents hope to heighten accountability without stepping on local control.

At press time, lawmakers were expecting to reconvene for a special session called by Republican Gov. John G. Rowland after new revenue projections showed an unanticipated shortfall of $300 million in the state budget. It was unclear how spending for education might be adjusted in the session—slated for late last year—but education leaders predicted that any belt-tightening would be minor, given that the shortfall represents a small fraction of Connecticut's overall state budget of about $12 billion. –JEFF ARCHER

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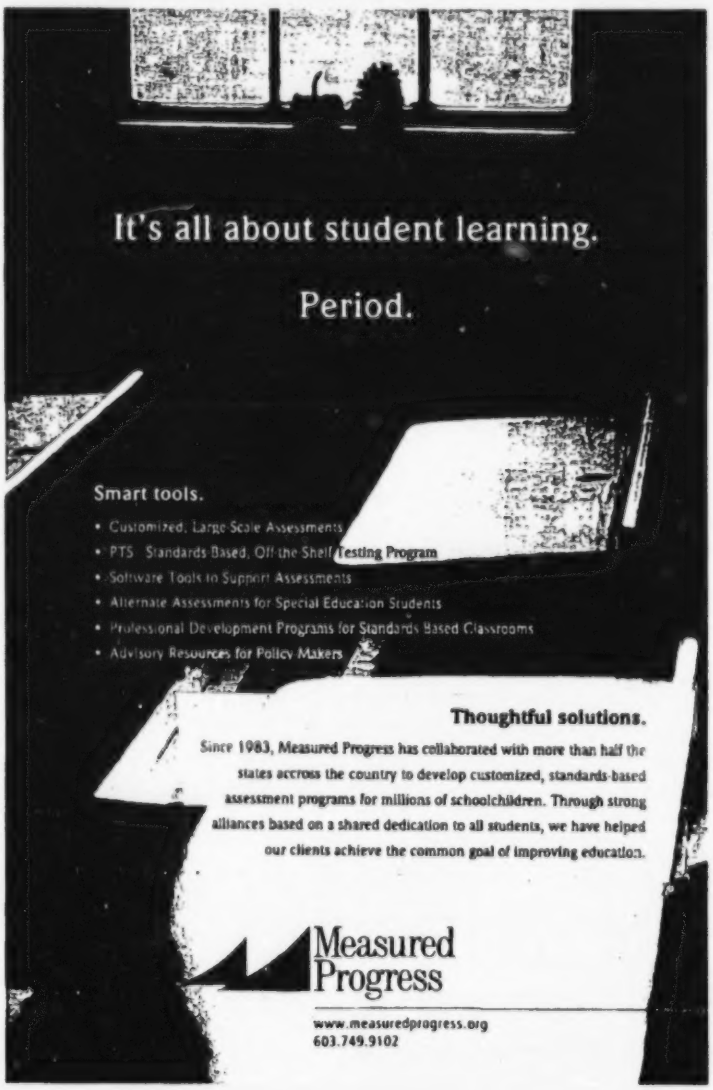
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Delaware

185 Public schools	$1 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (all revenue sources)	16.3% Children in poverty
7,500 Public school teachers	38.4% Minority students	14.1% Students with disabilities
114,000 Pre-K-12 enrollment		52,000 Children under 5

After ensuring access to child care, state policymakers' next step is to make sure programs are of high quality.

In Delaware, state leaders have shifted their focus from providing access to child care to making sure it is of high quality.

State officials have taken several measures in the past few years to improve the quality of such care. They surveyed child-care centers. They began monitoring the state's eight centers for disadvantaged 4-year-olds. And they drew up an eight-point plan to improve quality, a document that tackles everything from family engagement to child-care providers' professional development.

"So far, improving quality hasn't been [our top goal]. Quality will be our next initiative," says James J. Lesko, the education associate for early-childhood education, curriculum, and institutional improvement for the Delaware Department of Education.

The backdrop for action is a series of efforts by state leaders throughout the 1990s to increase access to child care. Because of programs begun in 1994 under then-Gov. Thomas R. Carper, a Democrat, the First State now pays for a program of child care and preschool for poor 4-year-olds.

In 2000, state lawmakers continued to expand access to programs. They made more low-income families eligible for state child-care subsidies, raising the ceiling for who can qualify.

Yet Delaware's system has also drawn fire as uneven. The southern part of the state is poor, and child-poverty rates there are rising, says Terry L. Schooley, the project director of Kids Count Delaware, a state-level organization based in Newark, Del., that provides information on the state's children.

Delaware also is one of only five states in the 16-state region served by the Southern Regional Education Board to pay for only half a day of kindergarten, notes David R. Denton, the director of school readiness and reading for the Atlanta-based group. Districts that want to offer full-day programs must come up with the money to pay for them.

For those and other reasons, Schooley faults state lawmakers' efforts last year. "The legislature hasn't done anything more than fund this office," she says of the early-care and -education office, which was up and running in January 2001.

The three-person office was created as part of the state's effort to improve quality. It helps make sure that three state agencies are implementing the state's early-success report, a blueprint crafted by state leaders in 2000.

Several years earlier, the state began surveying the quality of care in Delaware's state-financed child-care programs. The results were impressive, says Michael T. Gamel-McCormick, the director of the Center for Disability Studies at the University of Delaware in Newark.

"These kids are socially ready to learn," he says, noting that they can, for example, listen and follow directions.

Another initiative set up a system to monitor the state's eight early-childhood-assistance programs. The centers, located in public schools or operated by nonprofit or for-profit groups, provide education and child care to 4-year-olds whose families live in poverty. Because the centers have no waiting lists, state officials say they assume eligible 4-year-olds are being served.

Five inspectors make an announced visit to a state-financed center once every three years, Lesko says. The inspections, which began in July 1999, last four to five days.

One center has already lost state funding. In May 2000, a nonprofit child-care center in New Castle County was found "substantially out of compliance" with state regulations, according to Lesko.

No Big Spending Increases

Despite the attention to quality, state spending on early-childhood education didn't budge much last year. For the fiscal year that began last July 1, the state spent $4.28 million. The figure was $4.2 million for fiscal 2000. Five federal Head Start programs in Delaware serve a total of some 2,000 3- and 4-year-olds; some $9.3 million in federal funds were spent on such programs in fiscal 2001.

As a result of a 2000 measure, more state money is going toward increasing access to child-care subsidies. Now a family of three making 200 percent above the federal poverty line can qualify.

As a result, Delaware now pays for some or all of the child-care costs for 2,300 more families, or 13,000 total. The state spent $21.4 million in fiscal 2001 on such subsidies.

Nevertheless, some observers characterize Delaware's system of early-childhood education as scattershot. They say the state has hardly ensured that all its poor infants and children are receiving early education.

Denton of the Southern Regional Education Board praises officials for serving most poor 4-year-olds in the state-subsidized centers and federal Head Start programs. But, he says, the quality of the state's preschool teachers is "a bit iffy," noting that they are required to take only a few months of training.

If the Delaware legislature was relatively quiet on the early-childhood front in 2001, the same was true for the K-12 system. Says Sen. F. Gary Simpson, a Republican member of the Senate education committee: "There really weren't a lot of legislative issues in education this year, unlike the situation in the past two years."

Overall education spending rose from $914 million in 1999-2000 to just over $1 billion in 2000-01. But discretionary school spending did not rise as fast as in 2000, state officials say, because of increasing transportation and special education costs.

As a result, first-year Gov. Ruth Ann Minner, a Democrat, felt the pinch on a key initiative.

Originally, Minner called for spending $5 million in fiscal 2002 to hire a reading coach for every elementary school. Instead, lawmakers allotted half that amount. Reading specialists will now be hired at elementary schools ranked in the bottom half on student-achievement scores.

One reason for the bill was declining writing scores among 3rd graders, says Sen. David P. Sokola, the Democrat who chairs the education committee.

Results released last June showed that two-thirds of the 3rd grade students tested failed to meet the writing standard. That's a substantial change since 1998, when 56 percent met or exceeded the standard.

In other action, state policymakers softened a 1998 law aimed at cracking down on the social promotion of academically unready students. Originally, 3rd and 5th graders who hadn't passed a state test in reading, and 8th graders who had failed math and reading tests, would either have had to attend summer school or be held back a grade, starting in June 2000.

But that plan was revised when members of the public complained about the standards, says Valerie A. Woodruff, the state secretary of education. Students will still take state tests in 2002, but those who fail have an alternate route to promotion. They must submit a portfolio to an academic panel, which can promote them.

–MARK STRICHERZ

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	?
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	?
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	?
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	?
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	25%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	25%
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	22%
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	B+
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	D+
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	A-
Equity	C-

COMMENT: During the 1990s, state leaders focused on increasing access to child care. They're now turning their attention to quality through an eight-point plan that tackles such issues as family engagement and the education of child-care workers. On the K-12 front, lawmakers allotted money to hire reading specialists in elementary schools that post low scores on state tests. Students now must pass tests in grades 3, 5, and 8 to be promoted unless a panel determines their marks show "evidence of performance."

* NOTE: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. ? indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

District of Columbia

199 Public schools	$807 million Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (all revenue sources)	45.3% Children in poverty
5,000 Public school teachers	95.9% Minority students	12.8% Students with disabilities
79,800 Pre-K-12 enrollment		33,000 Children under 5

With city officials and parents backing them, early-education programs have long been crowd pleasers.

Through years of major academic, budgetary, and governance turmoil, the District of Columbia's extensive early-childhood programs have remained a reliable haven for Washington parents, most of whom work outside the home. The school system in the nation's capital has offered free preschool since the late 1960s. With some 4,105 students enrolled, the full-day program is offered at all city elementary schools and is open to all parents, regardless of income, on a first-come, first-served basis. Although parents often have to wait in long lines to enroll their children, officials say that the program adjusts to demand and waiting lists, if they exist, are short.

Washington's preschool teachers are required to have a bachelor's degree in early-childhood education, complete in-service training each year, and be recertified every five years.

All-day kindergarten has also been in place for decades. Like preschool teachers, the district's kindergarten teachers are required to be certified in early-childhood education, must complete annual in-service training, and must be recertified every five years.

The system has developed learning standards for its earliest grades in English/language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, music, visual arts, health, and physical education, says Mary H. Gill, the chief academic officer for the District of Columbia schools. In 2001, the system began training teachers in the standards. And school officials hope to pilot a new assessment of kindergartner school readiness in 2002, Gill says.

While the emphasis on core academics has waxed and waned over the years—with teaching social skills sometimes winning out over the three R's—preschool and kindergarten have endured through years of budget cuts and governance overhauls. That longevity, says former Deputy Superintendent of Schools Maurice Sykes, is mostly the result of a strong backing by officials and an even stronger buy-in by activist parents.

Private Child Care

While preschool and kindergarten are widely acknowledged as being among the school district's model programs, private and home-based child care and Head Start are another story. There are about 200 private child-care centers, which include preschools and nursery schools, and 240 licensed, home-based providers in the district. About 3,500 children take part in the federal Head Start program for youngsters from low-income families. The city's public schools run 37 child-care centers, and its department of recreation runs two centers.

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	6%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	6%
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	?
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	?
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	10%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	12%
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	11%
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	D
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	D
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	—
Equity	—

COMMENT: Washington has offered full-day preschool to families, regardless of income, since the late 1960s. All-day kindergarten has also been in place for decades. Now, the school district is trying to improve the quality of child-care providers by paying more to those who meet standards. This is the first year the nation's capital is receiving a graded report card in *Quality Counts*. Its academic standards are "clear and specific" in most subjects. In 2001, the superintendent reconstituted nine low-performing schools. Because the school system has no state revenue source, the District is not graded for adequacy or equity.

* NOTE: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1999-00 data, the most recent available. † indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

Home-based child-care providers are required to obtain licenses from the city's department of human services. Any person caring regularly for one or more children not related to the caregiver is considered such a provider in Washington. Before receiving a license, such a provider must complete 40 hours of training, which includes health and safety information as well as a business and learning component. Such centers are monitored regularly, according to Barbara Ferguson Kamara, the head of the office of early-childhood development in the human-services department. But the district does not require them to teach to its early-learning standards.

As in many big cities, the demand for child care in Washington far outpaces the supply. According to a survey by the University of the District of Columbia, more than 5,000 names were on waiting-lists to enroll in child care in 2001. The city, working with federal grants, recently helped pay for the expansion of existing child-care centers, efforts that are expected to generate 600 additional child-care slots in 2002, Kamara says. More, but similarly gradual, expansions are in the works over the next few years, she says.

In addition to the problem of overwhelming demand for care are the sometimes underwhelming qualifications of child-care workers. "There just isn't sufficient training" for private child-care workers and Head Start operators, says Sykes, the former deputy superintendent. Officials are hoping that a tiered reimbursement program, which pays higher subsidies to providers that meet quality criteria, will encourage more child-care providers to get training. As of last summer, fewer than 100 providers had participated.

Focus on Performance

District of Columbia school leaders continue in their struggle to overcome stagnating and sometimes declining student achievement. In summer 2001, officials announced for the second consecutive year that scores on the Stanford Achievement Test-9th Edition had not improved. The number of students scoring "below basic" increased more than 3 percentage points in 3rd grade reading and 6th grade mathematics. Nearly half the system's 10th and 11th graders read at "below basic" levels, according to the test scores, and almost three-quarters test that low in math.

Gill, the system's chief academic officer, emphasizes that "the scores are the average." She says, "This is not how every school and every student is performing. We had improvements in many schools."

When the test scores were released, Superintendent Paul L. Vance had just finished his first year in office. He promised that after a year of focusing on the nuts and bolts of the system—among them, food services, transportation, and timely employee paychecks—raising student achievement would be his primary focus. A year after his July 2000 appointment, Vance unveiled a five-year plan for improving schools. The Business Plan for Strategic Reform includes provisions for attracting and training new teachers and principals; new textbooks that support the district's learning standards; more programs for gifted students; a streamlined, service-oriented central administration; a new school spending plan; more partnerships with parent and community groups; and better coordination with city agencies. Vance also announced in summer 2001 his decision to reconstitute nine of the city's lowest-performing schools.

The superintendent also dismissed more than 500 teachers who had failed to obtain certification, provide paperwork to confirm their educational backgrounds, or pay application and other fees. They could reapply for their positions, but only after fulfilling the requirements.

Charter schools, whose creation for the District of Columbia was approved by Congress in 1996, continue to challenge the regular schools in the system. Enrollment is expected to swell to more than 10,000 students at charter schools this year. The city school board, which oversees about half the charter schools, while a panel appointed by the mayor oversees the others, voted in August to shutter three charter schools because of what it said were poor management and chronic academic problems.

–KERRY A. WHITE

Florida

3,131 Public schools	$14.6 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (all revenue sources)	21.9% Children in poverty
134,000 Public school teachers	45.9% Minority students	14.9% Students with disabilities
2.4 million Pre-K-12 enrollment		948,000 Children under 5

A law that consolidates state spending for all early-childhood programs generates praise and criticism.

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	?
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	?
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	?
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	?
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	23%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	23%
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	19%
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	A-
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	D+
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	C-
Equity	B

CONSIDER: In 2001, Florida consolidated state funding for all preschool programs and moved oversight of the programs to the state agency charged with overseeing welfare-to-work efforts. While proponents assert the shift permits more local control and expands services, critics charge that it could lower quality. Under a new governance system, an appointed state board oversees K-20 education. Florida receives credit for sanctions this year because it allows students to transfer out of low-performing schools. A state budget deficit, related to a drop in tourism, forced cuts in district spending.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. ? indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

"Florida's plan to serve economically disadvantaged children through school-readiness programs is one of the most ambitious and comprehensive programs in the nation."

GOV. JEB BUSH

How Florida governs its public schools is changing in a big way, and its early-childhood programs are no exception—for better or worse.

Under the same 2001 law that aims to create a "seamless" K-20 system linking elementary and secondary with higher education, the legislature put early-childhood programs under the state Agency for Workforce Innovation, which is charged with overseeing the state's welfare-to-work efforts. The statute specifically excludes school-readiness programs from the new K-20 system of education governance.

More than simply shifting the location of early-childhood offices, the new law fundamentally changes the way Florida pays for early-childhood programs. The law consolidates state funding for all early-childhood programs for the first time, and sends money to county-level early-childhood coalitions, based on the number of disadvantaged children who live in each county. It empowers the boards of those coalitions to spend money however they wish, even if that means cutting funds for support of the preschool programs run by local school districts that had long been directly subsidized by the state.

Each coalition board must seek state approval for its plans to expand and improve early care in its area. But the approval only assures that the coalitions are meeting state regulations; the state does not control the decisions.

No one knows yet how the changes in state law will play out. Proponents say the law allows more local control. Others say it could rob public schools of money, when they're the most qualified providers of early care in almost every community.

"It's taken all the early-childhood resources together, and there's no telling where some of them are going to come down," says David R. Denton, the director of school readiness and reading for the Atlanta-based Southern Regional Education Board.

Changes Ignite Controversy

Florida leaders say the changes are for the best.

Gov. Jeb Bush notes that, under his leadership, state spending on early childhood has risen from $575 million to $701 million in the past two years.

"Florida's plan to serve economically disadvantaged children through school-readiness programs is one of the most ambitious and comprehensive programs in the nation," the Republican governor said last fall as he launched a public-awareness campaign about changes to the law.

He added that the network of school-readiness coalitions in each county had expanded services to nearly 150,000 children, when only 20,000 had been served before. Part of the new law requires schools to screen all preschool-age students so that disabilities can be caught and addressed early.

But critics say the new system was passed far too quickly and without much legislative debate. They argue that the system threatens the overall quality of early-childhood care and education in Florida, allowing poorly trained child-care providers to go unchecked, because the local coalitions can send the money wherever they choose.

Critics also worry that public schools are likely to see their roles diminished under the new system. That is a problem, they argue, because public schools offer the potential for well-trained preschool teachers who can link early education with learning in higher grades.

In 1987, the state launched a prekindergarten initiative for disadvantaged children that sent money directly to districts, which ran preschools themselves with certified teachers, and contracted out some services—such as Head Start and similar programs—to private providers.

The system began to shift in 1999, when the Florida Partnership for School Readiness was formed, based on recommendations from a task force that had been appointed by Gov. Lawton Chiles, a Democrat. The organization was then housed in the office of Gov. Bush, who took office in January of that year.

Oversight of an array of programs and services for preschool children was placed under one agency. The 1999 law also established county-level coalitions to focus on the improvement and expansion of early-childhood programs, modeled after North Carolina's Smart Start. The Southern Regional Education Board released a study in September 2001 that looked at how early-childhood programs were working in five states. It determined that Florida's former program—the Pre-K Early Intervention Program—was one of the nation's most promising, showing better school-readiness test scores, better student attendance, and fewer instances in which children were held back a grade.

"The programs run by the public schools were generally high quality, with state-certified teachers," says Denton of the SREB. As for the new program, he says, everything is still unfolding.

Patricia J. Shuler, the school-readiness coordinator for the Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation, sees the new system—combined with a growing number of early-childhood coalitions in each county—as equally promising. Fifty-seven coalitions now exist across the state with the mission of making early-childhood programs better. There are 67 counties in Florida; some smaller counties have chosen to work together. "Every county in the state is covered," Shuler notes.

But unlike some other states, Florida hasn't squarely addressed competency standards of child-care workers, critics say. The new law left out specific rules and training requirements, leaving it up to the Agency for Workforce Innovation to set new

regulations. To that end, public hearings are being held across the state. The state has a program affiliated with North Carolina's Teacher Education And Compensation Helps, or TEACH program, which last year paid for more than 2,000 training scholarships for child-care workers.

The new law also fails to improve data-keeping that would provide parents with more information about the quality of child-care centers and preschool providers, critics say. Jack Levine, the president of the Tallahassee-based Center for Florida's Children, wants lawmakers to add the data-keeping system, beef up requirements and funding for training, and spend more money on care for young children statewide. "I believe this legislature and the state are trying to get by on the cheap," he says.

To Barbara Brigety, the coordinator of the early-childhood and intervention programs for the 100,000-student Duval County schools, "it's still early to tell" how well the new system is working. She adds that parents have no guarantees that preschools outside the public system offer high quality. Some private providers do not train their staffs, she says, and have no link to the academic path or accreditation requirements followed in some of the public preschools.

State officials say they may address such concerns, and at the end of 2001 were sorting out how the new early-childhood law was affecting preschools run by school districts. Class-size and training requirements for private child-care providers were eliminated by the new law, and state officials say further regulations or legislation may be needed to address those issues.

School Governance in Transition

Florida voters approved a ballot measure in 1998 that allowed the legislature to establish a single K-20 education system overseen by a state education board appointed by the governor. The new law eliminated the statewide board of regents that oversaw state colleges and universities, and it set up individual boards of trustees, also appointed by the governor, for those institutions.

In addition, it called for an overhaul of the state education agency, aimed at helping K-12 districts, community colleges, and four-year colleges work together. A new secretary of education, appointed last year by the governor to work with the state board, will oversee the K-20 system: He is Jim Horne, a Republican and a former state senator.

The state's practice of assigning letter grades to each school, one aspect of a school accountability system that is among the nation's most stringent, continues to be reviewed. Some schools' grades have shifted dramatically from one year to the next, a pattern that has spawned criticism of the program. Under the direction of the new state education board, the accountability system may be in for some changes.

Students can qualify for vouchers to use in other public or private schools if their schools don't show improvement. But no schools failed that badly last year, and only a couple of schools have ever scored so poorly that their students were allowed to apply for vouchers.

On other fronts, some lawmakers' bills to curb the state's accountability programs failed to gain ground.

The legislature did approve a $152 million plan aimed at improving teacher quality throughout the state. The plan encourages retirement-age teachers to stay on the job longer, gives all teachers $850 "retention" bonuses, and allows out-of-state teachers to count years spent working elsewhere toward their salaries in Florida, among other measures. Teachers' union officials opposed some of the measures, saying more permanent teacher-salary increases should have been the focus.

Budget cuts made headlines late in the year, as Florida faced a serious deficit, mostly from a drop in tourism-related sales taxes. State lawmakers met in special session in October to address a $1.3 billion shortfall in the current budget, forcing school districts to reduce spending. The legislators approved $800 million in cuts, including some $120 million in school aid, with additional action possible late last fall. —ALAN RICHARD

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Georgia

1,887 Public schools	$9.4 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (*all revenue sources*)	23.3% Children in poverty
94,000 Public school teachers	44.5% Minority students	10.9% Students with disabilities
1.4 million Pre-K-12 enrollment		595,000 Children under 5

The Peach State can lay claim to offering prekindergarten to all 4-year-olds.

Georgia's 9-year-old prekindergarten program, which serves more than 63,000 4-year-olds every year regardless of family income, is often held up as a model for the rest of the nation.

Between the state program and Head Start, 70 percent of Georgia's 4-year-olds are enrolled in prekindergarten.

Financed by a state lottery that was established during former Gov. Zell Miller's Democratic administration, the program operates in a variety of both public and private facilities and has been shown to prepare most children effectively for the demands of elementary school.

A longitudinal study conducted by the Applied Research Center at Georgia State University in Atlanta showed that after they finished 2nd grade in 2000, 82 percent of the more than 3,600 children in the sample were ready for the 3rd grade. And more than half were "judged to be extraordinarily good to good in their preparation," the study says.

Georgia officials say that doesn't mean all the challenges facing early-childhood education have been eliminated. "Miller did some good work in establishing pre-K. Now, we need to look at what happens zero to 3," says Bill Garrett, the executive director of the Georgia Early Learning Initiative, a public-private partnership formed in 1999 by the United Way, the Atlanta-based Joseph B. Whitehead Foundation, and the current governor, Roy E. Barnes, a Democrat.

Georgia's standards for child-care licensing are some of the least restrictive in the nation. The state, for example, is one of seven that allow a single provider to care for six infants—two more than the National Association for the Education of Young Children recommends.

So the first priority for Garrett and others involved in the initiative is to argue how more stringent regulations can benefit children. The group has pushed for a variety of improvements in the child-care industry. And during last year's legislative session, state lawmakers put some money toward the early-learning initiative's objectives.

This fiscal year, the state will spend $4 million on a new Early-Childhood Educators Incentives Program, which will reward annual salary supplements to early-childhood teachers who increase their educational levels. Amounts will range from $500 for a Child Development Associate credential to $2,000 for a four-year degree. The supplements are also designed to reduce turnover because providers will have to stay in their jobs for a year to receive the money.

Currently, the state has about 35,000 child-care providers, and officials expect roughly 10,000 of them to take advantage of the program.

Whether the legislature will continue to pay for it, though, depends on the results.

"If the outcomes are good, and we can show there has been less turnover, then we should be able to re-fund it," says Terrie Buckner, the project director of Advancing Careers Through Education and Training. That professional-development center at Gainesville College will run the new program.

To help providers pay for continuing their education, the state is also spending $500,000 in 2002 for TEACH scholarships, which is more than double the amount in past years and is expected to cover scholarships for at least 250 people.

TEACH, which stands for Teacher Education And Compensation Helps, pays for education and a salary bonus when the provider completes a program of study.

Georgia also launched a $1.85 million pilot program in which higher reimbursement rates will be paid to center-based and family child-care providers who attain specified levels of quality.

Providers that enroll children whose care is subsidized through the federal Child Care and Development Fund block grant are reimbursed for their services. Through Georgia's new, tiered system, premiums ranging from 15 percent to 50 percent of the current reimbursement rate will go to centers and caregivers that exceed the state licensing requirements in such areas as staff-to-child ratios and staff qualifications. The highest rate will go to nationally accredited programs.

Centers and providers will also be able to apply for training and technical-assistance grants, totaling more than $2.7 million, to help them improve the quality of their programs.

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	18%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	19%
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	24%
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	23%
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	24%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	25%
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	23%
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	B-
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	C-
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	B-
Equity	C-

COMMENT: The state's prekindergarten, open to all 4-year-olds, is a national model. But many say the standards for child-care licensing should be more stringent. Georgia provides incentives for early-childhood workers to pursue further education, and it's piloting a system that pays higher rates to child-care providers who meet higher standards. The state is administering new statewide tests this year and plans to begin rating schools in fall 2003. Beginning in the spring of 2004, the state intends to require that 3rd graders pass a reading test to be promoted to the next grade.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. † indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

> Former Gov. "Miller did some good work in establishing pre-K. Now, we need to look at what happens zero to 3."
>
> BILL GARRETT
> Executive Director
> Georgia Early Learning Initiative

High-Stakes Tests Approved

The legislature also focused on making improvements at the K-12 level in 2001, as Gov. Barnes continued with his efforts to phase in a standards-based accountability system.

The Office of Educational Accountability, a state agency that was established in 2000 to set the cut-off scores by which schools will be held accountable, was due to issue its first school performance report this past December. The state will begin rating schools, based on their performance, in fall 2003. But the ratings will not be used to identify schools for assistance or rewards until fall 2004.

Compared with 2000, Georgia students did make some progress on the state curriculum test that will be used to hold schools accountable. Gains were the most pronounced in reading, with the number of students meeting or exceeding the state standards increasing by 9 percentage points in 4th grade, 6 percentage points in 6th grade, and 7 percentage points in 8th grade.

Fourth, 6th, and 8th graders also posted gains of a few percentage points in English/language

arts and mathematics.

During the 2001 session, legislators passed Barnes' plan to hold individual students accountable for their own academic performance, in spite of heavy opposition from groups representing minority children.

Beginning in 2003-04, 3rd graders will have to pass a state reading test to be promoted to the next grade. Fifth and 8th graders will have to pass both reading and mathematics tests in later years.

The plan includes an appeals process in which a student who fails the tests on the second attempt will be referred to a committee made up of the principal, the classroom teacher, and one of the child's parents. The student will be held back only if the committee votes unanimously to do so. Such committees will be able to consider indicators of student performance beyond the test scores.

The law also requires schools to identify children who are struggling to meet the standards at the beginning of the school year and give them extra help instead of waiting for the results of the first test.

The legislature also extended the state's early-intervention program from K-3 through grade 5. The program mandates class sizes of 11 for students whose achievement is below grade level.

Many opponents of the plan, however, are not convinced that alternative indicators will actually be considered. "I have a lot of admiration for [the governor], but I think he is dead wrong," says Carl D. Glickman, a professor of education at the University of Georgia. "You should always err on the side of the child, but this is erring on the side of retention."

Barnes has signaled that he is looking for additional strategies to help students avoid possible retention in the first place. He recommended, and the legislature approved, the creation of a Closing the Achievement Gap Commission, which will look for ways to improve the achievement of the lowest-performing students.

"This is a critical activity if we are really going to look at all classifications of students," says Gary Ashley, who retired last year as the executive director of the Georgia School Boards Association.

New Route to Teaching

Meanwhile, talk of a possible school aid lawsuit continued among leaders of low-wealth districts. Over the summer of 2001, representatives from 36 districts met to form the Georgia School Funding Equity Consortium, which will give the governor and the legislature specific recommendations for equalizing funding during this year's legislative session.

Although the state's funding formula was adjusted during the 2001 session, many say the disparities are still too great.

"What has been done is not enough, and it has not been done quickly enough," contends Al Hunter, the superintendent of the 3,000-student Brantley County district in southeast Georgia.

Efforts to address a teacher shortage in the state were also put into place last year by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, the agency that oversees teacher certification.

The commission launched the Georgia Teacher Alternative Program, which requires an intensive four-week course over the summer before new teacher-candidates are placed in classrooms. Two more years of training and monitoring will be required while they teach. People who already hold bachelor's degrees but have not completed teacher-education programs are eligible.

The initiative stirred controversy. In a letter to the first year's 763 enrollees, Ralph Noble, the president of the National Education Association's Georgia affiliate, called the program an "inadequate crash course."

Lastly, steps were taken last year to give parents in two counties more choice over where to send their children to school. Under a law passed in 2000, the state board of education approved two new charter schools that their local school boards had rejected. "In the final analysis, parents will determine whether these schools will be successful," says Otis Brumby, the state board chairman until the end of last year. –LINDA JACOBSON

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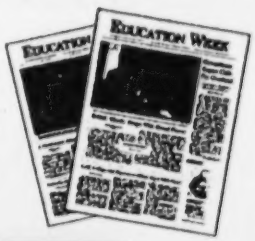

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Hawaii

255 Public schools	$1.2 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (*all revenue sources*)	15.1% Children in poverty
11,000 Public school teachers	79.5% Minority students	11.4% Students with disabilities
184,000 Pre-K-12 enrollment		78,000 Children under 5

Early-education efforts land a low spot on the priority list in a state where many parents prefer informal care.

With Hawaii officials focused on a teacher-contract dispute, a worsening budget picture, and a federal court order related to special-needs students, early-education issues have not been high on the state's priority list, some officials and advocates say. The state is putting most of its early-childhood efforts into improving access to preschool and child care for the most disadvantaged children.

Statewide, a recent survey by the state department of education found great disparities in access to early learning for low-income children. More than 70 percent of children in high-income areas arrive in kindergarten with preschool experience, but only about 30 percent of kindergartners in low-income areas have attended preschool.

A recent analysis by an advocacy group, Hawaii Kids Watch, notes that fewer than half the state's 3- and 4-year-olds from poor families receive financial help to attend preschool or Head Start programs.

Some suggest that Hawaiians' preference for informal care arrangements has thwarted the state's efforts in early education for needy children. According to the Children's Defense Fund, 60 percent of subsidies provided by the state are used for child care by relatives. "To me, one of the biggest issues in Hawaii is that this is an extended-family state," says Gary Kemp, an assistant administrator in the state human-services department. "We've done great things in Hawaii. But there are many children in informal settings."

Others blame the state's approach to funding early-childhood efforts. Hawaii doesn't subsidize or reimburse child-care or preschool providers directly. Payments go to families that have the choice of how and where to spend the funds.

Making More Preschools

In 2001, Gov. Benjamin J. Cayetano unveiled an initiative designed to improve access to early learning for disadvantaged preschoolers by building more preschools. Called Pre-Plus, the program, run by the office of Lt. Gov. Mazie Hirono, was intended to provide, by 2004, access to preschool programs for approximately 8,000 "gap children"—low-income and special-needs 3- and 4-year-olds who may not qualify for other preschool support programs.

Under the public-private partnership, the state will provide money to build preschool facilities on public school campuses. The preschool programs will be administered by private, public, and nonprofit providers who apply to use the facilities. But the legislature agreed to provide only half the $10 million the Democratic governor requested over two years, and the program has been scaled back. The state hopes to build 10 to 13 preschool classrooms each year for the next two years.

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	14%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	16%
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	16%
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	15%
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	17%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	19%
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	15%
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	D-
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	C-
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	B-
Equity	A

COMMENT: Lawmakers scaled back a proposal to expand early-learning services for poor children and those with special needs. They agreed to an overall 16 percent raise for teachers after a statewide strike. The strike put the brakes on a new statewide testing program; the tests were canceled for 2001 and are now scheduled to begin in spring 2002. A school rating system has been delayed until at least fall 2002. The state must fully comply with a court order to serve its special-needs students by March 2002.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. ? indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

Although the initial effort will serve only about 500 preschoolers, Hirono says it's a good start. "There is increasing recognition that preschool is a very important piece of the educational continuum," she says. "As we look at test scores and other issues later on, we have to support preschool so that children don't start behind."

Most public support for early-childhood services in Hawaii is paid for through the state department of human services. The education department provides preschool services for more than 800 special-education students, but is not otherwise responsible for early-learning initiatives.

In fiscal 2002, Hawaii will spend most of its $19.9 million in federal child-care block grant funds on Child Care Connections, the state's main funding stream for child-care and preschool support to families. In fiscal 2001, the state also converted $13.2 million in federal welfare funds into child-care spending, along with $9.8 million in matching funds and $8.3 million in state money.

The human-services department administers a program that provides scholarships for 4-year-olds, with priority going to low-income children or those with disabilities. The program provided $2.6 million in scholarships last year. The state also contributed a small supplement to its $18 million federal Head Start allocation to increase the number of full-day, full-year slots available. Head Start currently serves about 3,000 children across the state.

Public awareness of early-childhood needs is increasing, as is attention to quality, advocates say. Kathie Rinehart of Hawaii Kids Watch says government agencies increasingly recognize that child care is "not just a place to park kids while parents go to work."

Hawaii doesn't have content guidelines for preschool education; the state maintains quality control through its licensing system, which ensures that all programs meet basic requirements in the areas of health, safety, and staff-to-child ratios. As of 2001, 23 percent of preschoolers in the state attended preschools accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. And, through the Good Beginnings Alliance, Hawaii is one of 18 states now using TEACH, or Teacher Education And Compensation Helps.

The program aims to raise the quality of child care by providing education scholarships to caregivers. Hawaii also allocated $600,000 in fiscal 2001 for trained professionals to work with informal-care providers to help prepare children to enter school.

Standoff With Teachers

In April 2001, Hawaii's 13,000 teachers staged the first statewide strike in more than 25 years. Teachers were seeking a 22 percent increase in salaries; the state was offering 14 percent. Teacher salaries in Hawaii ranked 18th in the nation in 2000, according to the American Federation of Teachers. However, when those salaries were adjusted for cost of living, Hawaii ranked last.

The state agreed to a package that included an overall raise of about 16 percent and an increase in entry pay from $29,000 to $34,000, as well as retention bonuses of $550 a year and differential pay for teachers with higher levels of educational training. Although a dispute remains over pay for teachers with master's degrees, the rest of the new contract is in effect.

The strike put the brakes on Hawaii's new assessment system, which was piloted in 2000. Statewide testing of students in grades 3, 5, 8, and 10 was canceled for the school year and is scheduled to begin in spring 2002 instead.

The governor signed legislation in 2001 to revamp teacher education. The new legislation includes support for teachers to obtain national-board certification.

In other developments, Hawaii was facing a Nov. 1, 2001, deadline to comply with the *Felix* consent decree—put into place by the federal courts in 1994 as a result of a class action charging that the state violated federal law by failing to educate students with special needs. Late last fall, the federal courts found that the state had made enough progress to avoid court intervention for now. The state has until March 2002 to improve mental-health and educational services for special-needs children in all public schools. In October, state Superintendent Paul L. Mahieu resigned because of controversy over contracts to help bring the schools into compliance.

—KATHRYN M. DOHERTY

Idaho

658 Public schools	$1.3 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures *(all revenue sources)*	20.1% Children in poverty
14,000 Public school teachers	13.3% Minority students	15.8% Students with disabilities
246,000 Pre-K-12 enrollment		98,000 Children under 5

Early-childhood education is not a major priority; loose regulations for child care are the norm.

Early-childhood education has yet to become a major priority in the Idaho state legislature. Still, many groups are working independently and in concert with one another to improve the quality of care for the state's young children.

The state licensing requirements for child-care centers and home-based providers serving more than six children involve mostly limited health and safety standards, and do not deal with curriculum, assessment, or teacher quality. Centers and homes with fewer than seven children are not required to be licensed at all.

"The state does not put many parameters around what you can do in a child-care program," says Kathy Pavesic, the executive director of the Idaho Head Start Association. Even centers and homes holding state licenses are not required to ensure their child-care workers have specialized training in early-childhood education or child development; the state licensing standards only require that child-care workers receive four hours of training per year in any subject.

Such loose regulations exist, in large part, because many people in the Gem State view child care as a family's obligation. "Idaho is a state that prides itself on its strong families and family values," says Valerie Aker, the head of the Title I office for the state department of education. She adds that many children stay with relatives while their parents are working.

Indeed, Pavesic says the idea of changing state law to include tougher standards for early-childhood education is "hardly even discussed because there is such a negative response in the legislature." Because of the state's laissez-faire approach, some Idaho cities have adopted their own, tougher regulations. Annette Mooney, the city clerk in Boise for the past 18 years, helped design that city's child-care regulations in 1985. "I started it because I felt there was a need in the community," she says.

In Boise, the state capital, where 6,500 children attend licensed child care, city officials set stricter training requirements for child-care workers, such as mandating that they receive at least 10 hours of training specifically in child care. The state's requirements, by comparison, allow workers to fulfill training requirements by taking virtually any kind of class. Boise also requires mandatory criminal-background checks for child-care workers, lower child-teacher ratios, and compulsory immunizations for all children in child care.

Other efforts to improve early-childhood education in the state are making headway. For example, Idaho is one of 18 states that participate in the Teacher Education And Compensation Helps, or TEACH, Early Childhood Project, which was created by the Child Care Services Association in Chapel Hill, N.C., in 1990.

The Idaho program, which was launched in the fall of 1999, offers scholarships to child-care workers to help them obtain certification in child development through the Council for Professional Recognition, a national credentialing association based in Washington, or an associate's degree in early-childhood education from one of the four colleges in the state that participate in the program.

As of fall 2001, the program had awarded 80 scholarships, and 45 students were enrolled in classes. The knowledge that the students bring back to child-care facilities has enhanced the entire program, says Patricia Frankle, the executive director of the Idaho Association for the Education of Young Children. "We've seen just tremendous growth with the students," she says.

The TEACH program is paid for with state tax dollars through a child-care-development block grant managed by the state department of health and welfare, and by the Albertson's Foundation, which was created by the Boise-based grocery-store chain.

The Idaho AEYC is also working with the Albertson's Foundation to increase the number of child-care centers in the state with accreditation from the Washington-based National Association for the Education of Young Children. "We don't have state support," says Frankle, "but we do have an incredible number of programs."

State law in Idaho requires school districts to teach children from the ages of 6 to 16, meaning that parents send their children to kindergarten voluntarily. However, based on enrollment figures, state officials estimate that the vast majority of 5-year-olds in the state attend kindergarten. State officials could not provide an exact attendance rate.

Thirty-seven states do not require children to attend kindergarten. But Idaho is one of only nine states that do not require districts to offer kindergarten at all, which some early-childhood advocates fear could spell the end of kindergarten if the legislature tightens the purse strings.

"If funding ever got really tight, kindergarten would be the first to go," says Pavesic of the Idaho Head Start Association.

But Marilyn Howard, the state superintendent of public instruction, says the law is not a problem because every district offers a kindergarten program.

For her, the bigger issue is addressing the needs of kindergarten students who are at risk for academic failure, she says. To that end, Howard says that in the 2002 legislative session, she will ask lawmakers for $4 million to establish full-day kindergarten in districts with high numbers of kindergartners who score poorly on a state reading assessment.

"Early assessments have made it evident that if we want our kids to be successful, an early investment could really pay off for us," says Howard.

But securing that investment will be difficult. Last fall, Gov. Dirk Kempthorne, a Republican, trimmed $14 million from the K-12 education budget.

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	21%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	27%
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	30%
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	36%
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	?
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	?
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	?
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	D
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	D
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	C-
Equity	C

COMMENT: Idaho doesn't do much to regulate or finance child care, and that's unlikely to change soon. The state does provide some scholarships for child-care workers to improve their training, and a local foundation is encouraging centers to seek national accreditation. Districts were busy last year aligning their curricula and tests with new state academic standards. Districts have until 2004 to meet the requirement. A new law requires all districts to offer induction programs for novice teachers during the first three years of teaching, which raised the state's grade in this area.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. ? indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

Aligning Curricula

Meanwhile, Idaho school districts kept busy last year aligning their curricula to new state standards. The standards package was approved by the legislature in the spring of 2000, and districts have until 2004 to put programs, complete with assessments aligned to the standards, in place.

In addition, last year the state board of education stopped requiring students to take the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills. Still, 113 of the 114 districts in the state opted to administer the tests in 2001, because an alternative had not been developed. State school board officials planned to approach the legislature with an alternative test early this year.

The push for accountability is happening in other ways.

Last year, the legislature passed an initiative that, starting in 2004, will mandate that a majority of students in kindergarten and 1st grade read at grade level, as determined by a statewide assessment. The state department of education plans to publish a newsletter listing the schools that fail to meet the established goals the first year, and to send intervention teams to those schools in subsequent years. —MICHELLE GALLEY

Illinois

4,290 Public schools	$14.7 billion Annual pre-K-12	13.5% Children in poverty
129,000 Public school teachers	expenditures (all revenue sources)	13.9% Students with disabilities
2 million Pre-K-12 enrollment	39.3% Minority students	877,000 Children under 5

State eyes expanding access to child care as middle-income families struggle to afford programs.

When Illinois officials talk about access to early-childhood education, they don't decry a gap between rich and poor. They talk about how everyone in between struggles.

"There's a very big gap between low-income families, whose child care is subsidized, and upper-middle-class families, who can shoulder the burden," says Linda J. Saterfield, the state child-care administrator for the Illinois Department of Human Services. "It's these middle-and lower-middle-class families that are having a difficult time and aren't getting access to care."

The state's primary initiative is an Early Childhood Block Grant that supports services for low-income families in a wide range of settings.

A state-financed prekindergarten program for children at risk of faring poorly in school is part of that initiative. It enrolls nearly 40 percent of the 140,000 eligible 3- and 4-year-olds and operates largely in public schools.

Lately, the gap in the Prairie State has widened. Fewer families now receive state child-care subsidies because income-eligibility rules haven't been updated in three years.

Moreover, families in the lower-middle class have never gotten the kind of broad, intensive help the poor do through the state's block-grant program.

Gov. George H. Ryan, a Republican, sought to address the gap in April of last year. He formed a task force on universal access to preschool, saying that within the next five years, the state should be able to afford such a program for 3- to 5-year-olds. The panel's ranks feature a bipartisan coalition of influential women, including the governor's wife, Lura Lynn Ryan.

In recent years, the legislature has tackled both access to early-childhood education and the quality of care. Lawmakers raised pay for child-care workers and tried, unsuccessfully, to pass a measure that would have given tax breaks to businesses for building child-care centers.

But many early-childhood educators weren't impressed, criticizing such efforts as lacking.

"I've been around child care for 30 years, and progress is very slow," says Jan K. Deissler, the president of the Illinois Association for the Education of Young Children.

Increased Spending

Despite such criticisms, the state has increased its spending on early-childhood programs.

One example is the child-care portion of the state department of human services' budget, which gave subsidies in fiscal 2001 to an average of 212,000 children each month.

State spending for that purpose is estimated to be $297 million in fiscal 2002, an increase of 8.9 percent since 2000.

In contrast, the federal portion of that budget, $377 million in 2002, has jumped by only 6.9 percent since 2000.

Nonetheless, advocates criticize the state for failing last year to supplement $30 million in federal Child Care and Development Fund aid with state dollars.

State officials say the federal money came in midyear, after budget priorities were set.

"This was a bad, bad year," says Thomas W. Layman, the executive director of the Illinois Association for the Education of Young Children. "There was a budget problem at the state level, and as the year wore on, revenue projections kept going down."

Still, Illinois increased spending by 2 percent in fiscal 2002, to $164 million, for the pre-K portion of the state's early-childhood block grant. The total block grant was funded at $184 million.

The federal Head Start program for low-income children saw its spending rise, too.

Its budget for Illinois rose to $226.7 million in fiscal 2001, an increase of 5.5 percent from the year before, says Gina Ruther, the state's Head Start collaborator. Head Start enrolled approximately 37,800 children in 2000.

Kay Henderson, the division administrator for early-childhood education for the state board of education, points out that teachers in the state-financed prekindergarten program are required to have earned a bachelor's degree, which is a more stringent requirement than that for Head Start employees.

"There's heavy emphasis on exposure to language and literature" in the Illinois prekindergarten program, Henderson adds. "In classrooms, you'll see teachers reading with big books, children interacting with each other. There are field trips, say, to a post office."

'Year of the Study'

Some state leaders agree that no meaningful programs were passed last year.

"I think this was the year of the study," says Hazel E. Loucks, the deputy governor for education, referring to the governor's task force. Yet like other state officials, Loucks says: "We have a lot of good programs in place, and we aim to do more."

One of those programs, Great Start, enacted in 2000, seeks to improve the quality of child care.

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	21%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	27%
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	31%
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	30%
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	?
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	?
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	?
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	A-
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	C
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	--
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	C+
Equity	F

COMMENT: While the state subsidizes a preschool program for at-risk 3- and 4-year-olds, it's struggling to raise the quality of the child-care workforce. Several bills that would have expanded access to child care for lower-middle-class families failed in the legislature last year. Lawmakers also balked at a request to expand state testing to cover grades 3-11 annually. Although legislators modestly increased per-pupil aid, they didn't address overall reliance on property taxes to finance schools. A new accountability system is being phased in, raising the grade for standards and accountability from a B-last year to an A- this year.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1999-00 data, the most recent available. ? indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

"The public likes the idea of preschool, but they're not quite all the way to considering it equivalent to K-12 education."

SARA R. SLAUGHTER
Program Director
Chicago Metropolis 2020

It gives child-care workers an average annual bonus of $167 if they meet certain conditions: stay on the job for six months, earn a degree in early-childhood education, and earn no more than $15 an hour. The state has spent $5 million since the program's inception.

The case for such action was reinforced in June of last year, when a study criticizing the qualifications of the state's child-care workforce was released.

Of the more than 330,000 preschoolers in regulated child-care settings, only one-fifth were in state-financed prekindergarten programs where teachers were required to have a bachelor's degree and teaching credential, the study by National-Louis University and an Illinois child-care group found.

Another 330,000 children under age 5 were in informal child-care settings where no staff qualifications were necessary.

As for expanding access to service, the legislature failed to pass several such measures in 2001. Perhaps the most important would have increased the number of families receiving child-care subsidies. Currently, a family of three can earn up to $24,243 annually to qualify. But because lawmakers haven't revised income-eligibility rules since fiscal 1998, only poor families, and not lower-middle-class parents, receive subsidies.

Observers differ on why Illinois hasn't expanded access broadly since 1985.

"The public likes the idea of preschool, but they're not quite all the way to considering it equivalent to K-12 education," says Sara R. Slaughter, the program director for Chicago Metropolis 2020, an organization of the heads of the region's business, political, and civic interests.

Lagging Test Results

On a broader front, worries about student achievement and school funding dominated the K-12 discussion last year in Illinois. Indeed, state schools Superintendent Glenn W. "Max" McGee's contract was not renewed because student test results lagged.

Ronald J. Gidwitz, the chairman of the Illinois board of education, uses the analogy of long-distance running, a hobby of McGee's, to illustrate the board's disappointment with the test results.

"Max is a marathon runner," he says, "but he and we understand that sometimes it is necessary to hand the baton to someone else to accelerate the pace."

Almost 40 percent of 11th graders flunked the writing, mathematics, reading, or science sections of a major state exam, according to preliminary results. The representative sample of 10,544 students offers a snapshot of the 114,000 11th graders who took the test last spring.

Students apparently found science the hardest part of the test. Nearly 43 percent of the 11th graders in the sample were judged either "below standards" or meriting an "academic warning." In math, almost 41 percent failed; in reading, 38 percent; and in writing, 38 percent.

In another effort to raise scores, the state's standardized tests were moved from February to April to allow for more instructional time. Chicago school leaders in 2000 had blamed part of their schools' poor showing on the tests on the earlier date. In 2000, two-thirds of all the state's failing schools were in the Windy City.

Although Gov. Ryan, McGee, and the state board of education wanted to add grades 6, 9, and 10 to the state testing program, lawmakers balked last year. The proposal would have tested Illinois students each year in grades 3-11.

After delaying part of the state's accountability plan for two years while switching to a new test, Illinois resumed ranking schools in fall 2001. Even without adding low-performing schools to warning and watch lists, state officials had been providing them with assistance based on 1999 test scores.

–MARK STRICHERZ

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Indiana

1,874 Public schools	$7.7 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (all revenue sources)	12% Children in poverty
60,000 Public school teachers	15.7% Minority students	15.2% Students with disabilities
989,000 Pre-K-12 enrollment		423,000 Children under 5

Hoosier State lawmakers take 'baby steps' in expanding early-childhood offerings.

Indiana legislators took two small steps toward expanding the state's early-childhood offerings this past year. They approved $20 million in the biennial budget for fiscal 2001-02 and 2002-03 for full-day kindergarten.

They also moved the cutoff date for when children must turn 5 to register for kindergarten from June 1 to July 1, enabling more children to enroll at a younger age.

Advocates for early-childhood education say it's hard to be patient with what they see as the slow pace of the legislature's efforts to improve services to young children, but they are happy that the lawmakers are becoming more attentive to the need to do so.

"Indiana's style is slow but sure," says Donna Hogle, the Indiana Head Start partnership coordinator and an employee of the state's Family and Social Services Administration. "It isn't like our neighbors Ohio or Michigan, where people jump both feet into something. The people in Indiana tend to be very cautious, but there's a forward movement."

Hogle adds that improving child care and education has been like "doing a jigsaw puzzle."

"You have all these pieces all over the place," she says. "Hopefully, we'll end up with the goal of having some high-quality child care and enough for all kids."

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	31%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	31%
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	32%
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	35%
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	?
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	?
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	?
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	B+
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	C+
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	A-
Equity	C-

CONTENT: Lawmakers provided $20 million for full-day kindergarten in 2001. And, for the first time, unlicensed child-care providers must meet eight basic standards to receive federal subsidies. The state also uses federal money to provide scholarships for child-care workers who pursue further education. On the K-12 front, a new law permits the creation of charter schools. The state now receives credit for having sanctions because it permits students to transfer out of low-performing schools. And all but the state's high school social studies standards are "clear and specific."

* In '01. School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. † indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

"Indiana's style is slow but sure. It isn't like our neighbors Ohio or Michigan, where people jump both feet into something. The people in Indiana tend to be very cautious, but there's a forward movement."

DONNA HOGLE
Partnership Coordinator
Indiana Head Start

Focus on Full-Day Kindergarten

Early-childhood experts say that an important part of completing that puzzle would be for the state to enact full-day kindergarten for all children in the eligible age group. Gov. Frank L. O'Bannon, a Democrat, and state Superintendent of Public Instruction Suellen K. Reed, a Republican, have urged such a change in state policy for several years.

Indiana now pays only for half-day kindergarten. Some districts, though, provide full-day programs with their own money. An estimated 96 percent of Indiana children attend some kind of kindergarten program, even though it's not compulsory. Early-childhood experts expect that kindergarten would continue to be voluntary even if the state decided to pay for it in every district.

The $20 million that lawmakers approved for full-day kindergarten in 2001 isn't nearly enough to foot the cost of full-day programs in all districts, says Terry Spradlin, the legislative liaison for the state education department and a spokesman for Reed. Rather, it will serve as a catalyst for getting some districts to offer full-day programs for the first time.

In fact, 123—more than 40 percent—of Indiana's 294 districts applied for the money to start full-day kindergartens this past fall. State officials expect they'll be able to collect data from the new programs in those districts to build a case that full-day kindergarten benefits children, Spradlin says.

"If we can show results quickly—analysis and evaluation, track kids over time—and give our General Assembly that kind of information over the next few years, we'll see more support," he says.

Some early-childhood experts in the state lament the fact that kindergarten is the only facet of early-childhood education that the legislature has put money into. But at the same time, they praise legislators for making several decisions in spring 2001 that should improve the quality of child care.

New Standards for Providers

The legislature passed a law that for the first time requires unlicensed child-care providers who receive money from the federal Child Care and Development Fund to adhere to eight basic standards. Many child-care programs—including family day-care programs and those run by faith-based groups—receive the money in the form of child-care vouchers distributed to low-income parents.

The eight standards include requirements that a child-care provider have a working telephone, submit to a criminal-background check, and be certified in giving cardiopulmonary resuscitation to infants and children.

Legislators became convinced of the need for such standards after 11 Indiana children died in child-care settings within 18 months, says Carole Stein, the deputy director of the Family and Social Services Administration's bureau of child development. "Some of them were [Sudden Infant Death Syndrome] deaths. Some of them were accidents that could have been avoided," she says. "Sometimes you take a horrible situation and use it to move forward."

Child-care lobbyists were careful not to ask for too much in the initial legislation regarding standards, she adds. "We needed to get something through," Stein says, "and we didn't want to get into a situation where it was so confrontational that we'd lose everything."

Stein says child-care experts are pleased that the new law also mandates that anyone who applied for a license to provide child care as of July 2001 must begin coursework to earn a Child Development Associate credential and complete it within three years. Previously, only the directors of licensed child-care centers were required to pursue such credentials.

With funding from private and federal sources, Stein says, the state has launched several projects that should give child-care providers the incentive to take the new legal requirements seriously and improve the quality of their services. For instance, the state has launched a Web site that parents

can use to find child-care providers close to where they live and to check their records with the state.

Indiana also has made it possible for child-care providers to earn the CDA credential over the Internet through a state-sponsored program.

Boosters of early-childhood education praise Gov. O'Bannon for supporting initiatives for young children. He established the Indiana Center on Early Childhood Development at Ball State University a year ago with money from his own administrative budget, after the legislature rejected a proposal to spend $250,000 to start such a center.

Through the center, O'Bannon started a project called Building Bright Beginnings, in which every mother of a newborn baby receives a calendar during her hospital stay that tells her in three-month increments how her child will likely develop in his or her early years and what she can do to support that development.

The state uses federal money to run two early-childhood programs. One of them, called TEACH, or Teacher Education And Compensation Helps, is imported from North Carolina and provides educational opportunities to child-care providers. Last year, 1,329 Indiana child-care providers received scholarships from the program, which began in 1999.

The second program subsidized with federal aid is Head Start, the preschool program for disadvantaged youngsters, which served nearly 15,500 poor children in the state in 2001.

Hogle says she worries about the estimated 20,000 additional children who are eligible for Head Start but aren't enrolled. To be eligible, a preschool child must live in a household that meets federal poverty guidelines; the household must make less than $17,650 a year for a family of four. "Are they in an environment conducive to positive development? I'm not sure," Hogle says.

Jayma A. Ferguson, the manager of the state education department's early-childhood division, says that Indiana still has a lot of work to do to ensure that all children are in situations where they can develop in a healthy way, but that advocates have made substantial progress in laying the groundwork for achieving such a goal.

"We're still lacking the money," Ferguson says, "but a lot of things are happening. I don't think it would happen as fast as I want it to."

More Testing on the Horizon

Indiana educators are pleased with the attention the legislature paid to education during its 2001 session.

Lawmakers raised the amount of money for basic operating support for schools, despite the state's economic slowdown. They also passed a law that will permit charter schools, something the governor and the state superintendent had advocated for years.

It was unclear at the end of last year if the full amount of education appropriations by lawmakers would stay intact because of a decrease in state revenues beyond what had been anticipated.

At the same time, state education leaders forged ahead on some big-picture projects.

The state board of education approved a plan last year to implement annual statewide testing, on the condition that the department of education receive state or federal funding to pay for the plan. The state now tests children in grades 3, 6, 8, and 10 in English and math. The new plan calls for testing in the same subjects for grades 4, 5, 7, and 9 as well.

The board unanimously adopted on Oct. 4 an accountability plan that will replace the state's current accreditation system and rank schools based on their students' scores on the state assessment—the Indiana State Testing for Educational Progress-Plus exam—and how much they improve those scores on average over a three-year period.

Schools will begin to be placed in new performance categories in the 2005-06 school year. The plan has various rewards or consequences built into it, but does not call for a state takeover of a school until the school has shown less-than-adequate improvement for five consecutive years. –MARY ANN ZEHR

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Iowa

1,531 Public schools	$3.3 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures *(all revenue sources)*	15.4% Children in poverty
34,000 Public school teachers		14.2% Students with disabilities
497,000 Pre-K-12 enrollment	9.2% Minority students	188,000 Children under 5

Inadequate funding and fragmented programs leave the needs of many young children unmet.

Iowa's push to boost teacher salaries has come as state programs to educate its youngest children remain modest.

Although the state spared most education programs from significant budget cuts last year, financial belt-tightening left no room to expand early-childhood programs.

Frustrated by a fragmented system of programs that serve a limited number of children, advocates for early-childhood education argue that it will take a focused and well-financed plan, backed by the governor's office, to meet the needs of Iowa's children.

Early-childhood education "is in a maintenance mode right now," Kathi Slaughter, a spokeswoman for the Iowa Department of Education, acknowledges. "It's not on any list as a priority, and it's not on any list to be eliminated."

Adds Anita Varme, the coordinator of the state's Head Start collaboration office: "I think [state leaders'] heart is there, but the money doesn't seem to be there."

Still, there is hope that the latest state program aimed at children up to age 5, called Community Empowerment, could serve as a model to reshape early-childhood education in Iowa.

The program is rooted in a strong local component, a hallmark of Iowa's philosophy on the limited role of state government. The Community Empowerment legislation, passed in 1998, called for the formation of local collaboratives that would draw up community plans to set priorities for needs in early-childhood care and education.

In its first year, the program received $5 million in state money to distribute grants to the local groups for home visits, professional development, early-literacy programs, and the cost of preschool slots. State funding climbed to $15 million in 2000 and will remain at that level for 2001-02. Federal aid for the program has reached $6.3 million and is generally used to improve child care.

The legislature went to great lengths to ensure that the local boards were not filled with agency officials by requiring that a majority of the members be consumers. Many community-empowerment boards have succeeded in augmenting their government aid with private money, says Kris Bell, the state's empowerment facilitator.

While the boards are not regulated or monitored, they must report how well they are achieving their local goals, Bell says. Last year marked the first time that all of Iowa's 99 counties were involved in the empowerment effort and received funding.

Community empowerment enjoys bipartisan support, but it's yet another small demonstration effort that has been the foundation of early-childhood education in Iowa, says Charles Bruner, the director of the Child and Family Policy Center, a research organization in Des Moines.

"I think [empowerment boards] have just tipped the surface of what really would be a comprehensive agenda," Bruner says. "There is no top leadership to go at [early-childhood education] at more than on a demonstration basis."

Marla Sheffler, the executive director of the Iowa Child Care and Early Education Network, is urging the state to push for mandatory registration of all child-care programs and then set up universal compulsory standards.

More Rhetoric Than Money?

Gov. Tom Vilsack, a Democrat, assembled a task force on early-childhood education in 1999. The task force made a string of recommendations that have never been acted on.

Bruner, a former state legislator, says that Iowans have heard a lot of rhetoric on early-childhood education, but that the money has never followed. He says the current programs have had a marginal impact because they reach so few children.

In 1998, more than 90,000 children between birth and age 5, or 55 percent of that age group, were not attending a child-care program in the state, according to the Iowa Child Care and Early Education Network.

Iowa's Head Start programs reached 7,235 children, or about 60 percent of those eligible, in 2000. Shared Visions, another state-financed early-childhood program, serves about 3,600 children.

The 11-year-old Shared Visions initiative is largely used to expand Head Start programs and requires participating child-care centers to be accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children to receive funding. Often cited as an exemplary program nationally, Shared Visions, which targets disadvantaged children from birth to age 5, has quality standards as well. The program is designed to address a full range of children's needs, including health, safety, social services, nutrition, and education.

Although Shared Visions has had some success, the state hasn't given the $8.3 million program a funding increase in several years, Varme of the Head Start collaboration office says. Additional money seems even less likely this year.

Every state agency faced an average 6 percent budget cut to make up for a $300 million decrease in state revenues for the 2001-02 fiscal year. One of the deepest cuts to education was a $20 million reduction in technology funding.

"It's a gruesome decisionmaking process when you have this kind of a budget climate,"

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	28%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	?
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	37%
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	?
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	35%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	?
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	?
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	F
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	D+
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	B
Equity	C+

COMMENT: Belt-tightening left no room to expand aid for early-childhood programs in 2001. Budgetary woes also meant cuts in K-12 education, including a $20 million loss in technology funding. Despite the bleak revenue picture, the legislature used money from a multistate tobacco settlement to finance a pioneering teacher-compensation package that will pay educators based on their performance and their students' achievement. The $40 million pay plan will include a mentoring program for novice teachers.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. ? indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

> Early-childhood education "is in a maintenance mode right now. It's not on any list as a priority, and it's not on any list to be eliminated."
>
> KATHI SLAUGHTER
> Spokeswoman
> Iowa Department
> of Education

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says Slaughter.

Despite having to struggle with budget woes, the Iowa legislature did attempt to confront the state's teacher shortage and concerns over student test scores by approving a pioneering teacher-compensation package last year. But many question to what extent the legislation will address Iowa's teacher shortfall, including the state teachers' union, which opposed the bill. "I'm afraid that we're setting people up for failure," says Jolene Franken, the president of the Iowa State Education Association.

Pay for Performance

The new $40 million plan will pay educators based on their work performance and their students' achievement, replacing the traditional salary schedule based on seniority.

About $31.2 million of the program's funding will be used directly to increase teacher salaries.

The state minimum annual salary for beginning teachers will climb from $23,000 to $28,000. Districts opting to participate in the program must increase their first-year teachers' pay by $1,500 annually until the salaries meet the new $28,000 state minimum. Teachers in their third or subsequent years in the classroom who make less than $30,000 annually will have their salaries brought up to that level. Districts will use the remaining money from the plan to raise teacher pay by bargaining with their unions.

> "If they continue to take money from the tobacco fund and that runs out, what are you going to do?"
>
> JOLENE FRANKEN
> President, Iowa State Education Association

The state union contends that the plan doesn't have enough money to address the salary gap for teachers working in smaller and midsize districts. Union leaders say they fear that to make up the difference, funds set aside to increase veteran teachers' salaries will be depleted.

But Joe Shannahan, the governor's spokesman, described the plan as a long-term project that could take up to five years to complete. He says keeping the best teachers available in the classroom is key to improving students' test scores.

In its first year, the plan will set new standards for teachers, create a mentoring and induction program for first-year teachers, and devise a new job-evaluation system. The plan also will allow districts the option of giving licensed staff members cash rewards if students in their schools improve their scores on assessments administered at the beginning of the academic year and at the end. The state set aside $1 million for that voluntary, two-year pilot program. All districts must participate in the program by 2003.

But with funding for the program tied to nonrenewable dollars from the state's share of the multistate settlement with major tobacco companies, some teachers are concerned that financing may disappear in later years. Those worries are compounded by the grim financial picture being predicted for Iowa in the 2003 fiscal year. "If they continue to take money from the tobacco fund and that runs out, what are you going to do?" Franken of the teachers' union says.

Slaughter, the education department spokeswoman, says the agency has been fielding many questions about the compensation plan's future funding. She says the department is planning on continued funding, and she adds that the greater the number of participating districts, the more influence the plan will have during this year's legislative session. —KAYLA SCOON REID

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Kansas

1,440 Public schools	$3.2 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (all revenue sources)	12.9% Children in poverty
33,000 Public school teachers	19.9% Minority students	12.7% Students with disabilities
470,000 Pre-K-12 enrollment		189,000 Children under 5

State keeps tight grip on its purse strings, focusing spending on basic programs with proven records.

Voters and lawmakers in Kansas have long been conservative when it comes to spending money, so they've opted to concentrate their efforts on time-tested early-childhood initiatives. The aim is to offer basic educational experiences and health care to some of the state's most disadvantaged youngsters.

The state committed to spending $7.5 million annually from 1998 through 2002 on Early Head Start, the federal program that provides healthcare and nutrition services, along with parental education, to poor families with children up to age 3. The state pays for the program with federal block grant money provided as part of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families initiative, established by the 1996 federal law overhauling the welfare system.

In 1998, the state also implemented a program for at-risk 4-year-olds to ensure that children ineligible for federal initiatives and other state programs receive preschool classes at least four days a week. Participants include children living in poverty, those born to a teenage or single parent, and those for whom English is not the native language. The program offers transportation, nutrition, and health services to the more than 3,700 children it serves, about one-third of the eligible population. Legislators allocated $8.5 million for the initiative this fiscal year, an increase from $7.27 million in fiscal 2001, in an attempt to reach a greater number of children.

The state also continues to invest heavily in the Parents as Teachers Program. The 11-year-old initiative, paid for in part with matching funds provided by the 232 participating school districts, offers about 17,000 families of all economic backgrounds monthly home visits from consultants trained to instruct parents in the care and development of newborns and toddlers. In fiscal 2001, the state spent $1 million for the program; for fiscal 2002, the state has appropriated $8.5 million.

Children are not required to attend kindergarten in Kansas, but nearly all families take advantage of programs offered by their school districts, the state education department reports.

Lawmakers have begun to pay closer attention to the quality of child-care centers and preschools across the state.

In 2001, a task force appointed by Gov. Bill Graves, a Republican, unveiled a list of recommended practices in children's literacy and numeracy for child-care workers and preschool teachers. The effort followed an outline of eight "core competencies" needed by such professionals throughout their careers, a list drawn up by the state along with Missouri. The guidelines are voluntary.

Kansas is also experimenting with a handful of professional-development programs designed to recruit and retain those who work with children under age 5.

In January 2001, Kansas implemented the WAGE$ program, an initiative pioneered in North Carolina that aims to supplement child-care workers' income. The program provides annual stipends of between $300 and $4,000 to those who have earned or are working toward college degrees in early-childhood education, make less than $14.45 an hour, and agree to work at their places of employment for at least a year.

At the start of the program, the Kansas legislature earmarked $5 million over five years for the effort, money that came from the federal government in the form of a block grant.

About $3 million of that amount will go into Smart Start Kansas grants in fiscal 2002, money awarded to various community groups that work to improve early-childhood education. And legislators will spend $1.62 million in 2002 to provide technical help and training to those who work with infants and toddlers. The state hopes to reach a majority of Kansas' more than 7,000 child-care centers.

Such initiatives are helpful in upgrading the quality of care, but the real problem in Kansas remains low pay for those who work with young children, says Eileen L. Hogan, the director of the early-childhood program at Emporia State University. Child-care workers in Kansas earned an average of $14,310 a year in 1999; preschool teachers earned $18,920. Benefits such as medical coverage and vacation time are often skimpy for both groups. The result is frequent turnover in the profession, children's advocates say, which can be especially unsettling for young children.

Nationwide, the average salary for child-care workers was $15,430 in 1999, while preschool teachers earned $19,610.

The good news is that the four state agencies charged with implementing programs in early-childhood education are working with one another and a dozen or so active advocacy groups in Kansas to improve child care and preschool, says Doug Bowman, who coordinates a state council set up to ensure such cooperation. While some people have talked of consolidating the system, political rivalries continue and no consensus has occurred, he says.

But there is only so much planning that coalitions can do when programs are not subsidized at appropriate levels, says Lynn H. Owen, a consultant to the state education department who specializes in early-childhood education.

"I see a lot of debate about this, a lot of caring in the legislature, but it comes down to the fact that there's limited dollars to be spent on children," she says.

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	30%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	34%
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	?
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	?
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	34%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	35%
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	?
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	C+
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	F
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	B
Equity	B-

COMMENT: A preschool program for at-risk 4-year-olds and a home-visitation program for the parents of infants and toddlers form the foundation of the state's early-childhood efforts. Last year, a task force recommended best practices in the areas of literacy and numeracy for child-care teachers. Budget woes loom large, though, over both K-12 and early education. The state resolved the topic of evolution in its science standards, but won't be giving standards-based tests in science or social studies in 2001-02. It also adopted incentives for teachers to earn national certification.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. ? indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

Restoring Evolution

Those fiscal limits were dramatized by a severe budget shortfall that cast a pall over the entire 2001 legislative session and forced Kansas lawmakers to make painful decisions about funding in all areas of the budget, including education.

For example, they spent much of the session vigorously debating a restructuring of the K-12 school finance system, but after noting opposition to tax increases that would be needed, left it unchanged. Instead, the legislators increased per-pupil spending, provided some increases for the cost of living, and agreed to shoulder a larger share of special education costs.

Critics, though, were quick to note that the increases were half the rate of inflation, and that districts would be forced either to raise taxes to meet basic expenses or make budget cuts.

"We're rapidly moving toward a real crisis situation," says Christy Levings, the president of the Kansas National Education Association. "Schools are already on very tight budgets, and now, they'll have to eliminate positions at a time when we're trying to lower class size for at-risk kids."

In other news, the Kansas board of education made good on a promise by new members to revisit science standards that had gained the Sunflower State national attention—most of it negative.

Scientists applauded the 10-member board, which included four new faces elected in 2000, when it voted 7-3 in February 2001 to restore coverage of the theory of evolution and other scientific concepts that had been stripped from the standards in 1999 because of religious objections.

—JULIE BLAIR

Kentucky

1,364 Public schools	$4.3 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (*all revenue sources*)	18.6% Children in poverty
41,000 Public school teachers	11.2% Minority students	14.1% Students with disabilities
623,000 Pre-K-12 enrollment		266,000 Children under 5

The state's landmark school improvement law includes provisions to help 4-year-olds prepare for the primary grades.

Kentucky is best known for blazing a new frontier in the movement to set standards and hold schools accountable for results.

What is less known is that the same 1990 law that set the accountability process in motion also created preschool programs for all disadvantaged 4-year-olds.

Almost 12 years later, the state has built school-based preschool programs serving approximately 15,900 children—all eligible for the federal school meals program. The program has reached every county in the state, and many districts are starting to expand their half-day programs into full-day ones.

Education leaders throughout the state are starting to see the benefits of the preschool program.

"These kids are coming into school with a readiness that they did not have before," says Gene Wilhoit, the state commissioner of education. "The message here is, it does work."

A study that tracked the preschool participants through the 5th grade concludes that the program has a lasting impact. Participants' kindergarten teachers say they are "as ready for kindergarten as their peers from higher-income families," and their 5th grade teachers report that the preschool graduates "continue to do as well" as their peers, according to the study commissioned by the Kentucky education department.

"There's a consensus that [offering preschool] was the right thing to do," says Robert F. Sexton, the executive director of the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence, a Lexington-based advocate for the state's school improvement agenda. "It's one of the programs where there have been no negatives and no debate at all."

The state appropriates $47 million for the program, enough to pay about 75 percent of the costs. Local districts pick up the balance. Unlike states that keep waiting lists of eligible children if preschool programs fill up—even while claiming their programs are universal—Kentucky guarantees that all eligible children will receive a space.

The state also has a Family Resource Center in every school that has more than 20 percent of its students living in poverty. The centers offer child care for children starting at age 2, or they help families find child care. They also provide training for child-care providers and parents. More than 80 percent of the state's 1,300 schools run such centers.

In addition, the state requires a bachelor's degree for public school kindergarten and prekindergarten teachers. In the six years since the early-childhood license was instituted, two-thirds of the preschool teachers have earned it. Beginning fall 2002, new preschool teachers must earn the license. The rest are allowed to continue teaching without one because their tenure predates the license's existence.

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	17%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	21%
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	29%
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	29%
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	29%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	29%
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	21%
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	A
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	C+
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	B-
Equity	C+

COMMENT: The 1990 law that transformed the state's K-12 system also created a preschool program for all disadvantaged 4-year-olds. Now, the state is trying to improve the quality of child care through a system that offers higher subsidies to providers who go beyond current licensing standards. The quality of the teaching force is the main issue at all levels of education; state officials plan to introduce a legislative package in 2002 to address the topic. The state also is moving forward with a revised accountability plan.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. ? indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

About 30 percent of school districts offer full-day preschool. And about 75 percent of elementary schools offer full-day kindergarten, even though state funding pays only for half-day programs.

"We need to move toward longer exposure in preschool, and we're seeing a similar trend in kindergarten as well," Wilhoit says.

In the child-care arena, Gov. Paul E. Patton, a Democrat, has persuaded lawmakers to enact incentives for providers. They can earn extra state subsidies for offering services that go beyond the state's licensing standards. Under the so-called Star Quality Incentive Awards, a child-care center could be eligible for monthly bonuses of up to $17 per child if it meets certain goals. Criteria include a teacher-to-child ratio that compares with national accreditation-group recommendations, entry-level early-childhood degrees for at least half the staff, and 12 hours of annual professional development for all staff members.

Patton has also instituted a variety of health programs for the state's youngest residents, says Kim F. Townley, the director of the Kentucky Office of Early-Childhood Development.

Every hospital in the state now conducts a hearing screening of newborns. Social workers visit the homes of every newborn in 47 of the state's 120 counties, with the program scheduled to be up and running in every community by 2003. Subsidized eye exams are required for every student entering school for the first time, whether it is the state's program for 3-year-olds with disabilities, the preschool program, or kindergarten.

"What we want to do is support family and communities in making sure every environment in which children spend time is the best that it can be," Townley says.

Limited Teacher Incentives

In the coming years, the main K-12 issue in Kentucky is likely to be the quality of the teaching force—from those at the early-childhood level through the end of high school.

About 11,000 of the state's 40,000 teachers are eligible to retire but keep teaching, Wilhoit says. When they decide to leave the profession, the education commissioner says, the state doesn't have the incentives to lure highly qualified replacements. "We made a big commitment to teacher salaries at the beginning of the reform" in 1990, he says. "We've only made incremental increases since."

In the 2002 legislative session, the state education department intends to propose increasing pay across the board and expanding the number of teachers' working days from 180 to 188, he says.

The department is also seeking to establish a program of mentor-teachers to advise the schools with the lowest student-achievement levels in the state. Those teachers could earn up to $60,000 a year—the top of the state's current pay scale.

Any such changes will be hard to pay for in the state's tightest budget in at least a decade, though. "I'm not sure we can afford all of this in one year," Wilhoit says.

'Growth Chart'

On the standards and assessment front, the state board of education last year adopted a set of performance standards that define how well schools will need to perform on state tests so that every school scores in the "proficient" category by 2014. Last summer, the state prepared a customized "growth chart" for every school. It shows at which level the school's students should score in order for Kentucky to reach its goal of having every school score at least 100 on the state's 140-point accountability index. The chart also shows at what point the school will receive state help if the growth isn't fast enough.

The state's 3rd, 6th, and 9th graders scored above the national average in reading, language, and mathematics last year. It was the first time that Kentucky ranked above the 50th percentile in every subject since the state started giving the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills in 1997.

Likewise in the Kentucky Core Content Tests—another portion of the assessment system—the state reported steady improvement across every grade and in every subject.

-DAVID J. HOFF

Louisiana

1,513 Public schools	$4.4 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (all revenue sources)	29.2% Children in poverty
50,000 Public school teachers	50.7% Minority students	12.6% Students with disabilities
743,000 Pre-K-12 enrollment		317,000 Children under 5

With the nation's second-highest child-poverty rate, the state dedicates $15 million in federal aid to preschool.

Louisiana has launched an early-childhood initiative that proponents hope will eventually ensure access to prekindergarten for all poor children in the state.

The legislature in spring 2001 overwhelmingly approved a plan to dedicate $15 million in federal aid to establishing the program for 4-year-olds.

"I see this as a very important step," says Cecil J. Picard, the state superintendent of education and a longtime supporter of expanded early learning in the state. "Louisiana probably needs early-childhood [programs] more than any other state."

Louisiana has the highest child-poverty rate in the South—29 percent—and the second highest nationwide, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

The current funding level will not guarantee prekindergarten for all 4-year-olds living in poverty. Picard estimates that about 14,000 children now in that category are not receiving services through other programs, such as Head Start. The new initiative is expected to serve about 3,000 children beginning in January 2002, at a cost of $5,000 per child.

Over time, Picard and other supporters will push to provide prekindergarten for all those children, at an estimated $70 million annual cost. Except for about $160,000 in state money for administration, the $15 million came from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, a federal grant to help families get off welfare.

"It's not nearly enough, but we need to get started," says Sen. William A. Jones Jr., a Democrat and the chief sponsor of the pre-K measure in the state legislature. "We need to grow into this." Jones says that he is hopeful that over time the state will kick in a substantial amount from its general fund to expand the program.

The new program was scheduled to begin in January 2002. The money will be directed to public school districts, which could operate the preschools within existing elementary school buildings or form partnerships with private child-care facilities. The programs will run for 10 hours a day, with six hours dedicated to instruction-related activities. The program will be free for children who qualify for a free or reduced-price lunch; districts can allow other students to attend by charging tuition on a sliding scale.

Each classroom is required to have a lead teacher certified in early-childhood education, although some flexibility is possible if the local superintendent establishes that no qualified applicants are available.

Separately, the legislature provided an additional $3 million in TANF money to set up a prekindergarten program for nonpublic schools in New Orleans, to be administered by Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New Orleans. That provision has been the subject of debate, as critics, and some supporters, see it as a move toward publicly financed vouchers for private schools.

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	14%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	12%
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	19%
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	15%
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	19%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	15%
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	12%
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	A-
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	C
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	C+
Equity	C+

CONTEXT: The state used federal money to launch a prekindergarten program for disadvantaged children in 2001. Legislators allocated an additional $3 million in federal aid for a similar program for nonpublic schools in New Orleans, to be administered by Catholic Charities. The state continued to move forward on accountability, providing more money to help students meet state standards, allotting funds to reward school performance, and preparing to implement a district accountability system in 2002.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "Data at the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1995-99 data, the most recent available. † indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

New Standards

The Louisiana Department of Education is working to craft a set of state standards for early-childhood education. Mary Louise Jones, a section supervisor in the division of student standards and assessment, says the state last fall was planning to convene a broad group of interested parties to help refine existing program standards and set curriculum standards.

At the same time, Louisiana State University, through a private donation of $1 million, announced last August it would establish an early-childhood center at the institution's Baton Rouge campus. The facility is expected to conduct research, evaluate programs, and provide technical help.

Beyond the new prekindergarten program, Louisiana preschoolers also benefit under a number of other programs, most financed with federal dollars, such as Head Start, Even Start, and Title I.

The main other state initiative for early-childhood education is the hieroglyphically named "8(g)" preschool/early-childhood block grant, financed at $7.9 million for fiscal 2001. The program title refers to the enabling paragraph of the federal Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, under which Louisiana and other coastal states receive a "fair and equitable" share of mineral revenue derived from a federal three-mile submerged strip adjacent to a state's coast. In 1985, the Louisiana legislature and voters approved a constitutional amendment to dedicate the money to improving education, with the annual interest earned equally divided between pre-K-12 and higher education.

Meanwhile, Louisiana is in the midst of the third year since its high-stakes testing system took effect. Louisiana is the first state to implement a promotion policy for the elementary and middle grades that bases students' academic fates on state assessments. Both 4th and 8th graders must pass state tests in mathematics and reading before being promoted to the next grade.

Several court challenges to the state's testing regime have been lodged. None has prevailed, though at least one complaint filed with the U.S. Department of Education's office for civil rights is pending. In addition, bills were proposed, but not passed, in the legislature last year to prevent tests from playing a lead role in determining students' academic futures.

"It's becoming more institutionalized," Scott M. Norton, the director of standards and assessments for the state education department, says of the testing system. Norton says he is especially pleased that the legislature agreed to a big spending increase to help continue the accountability and assessment program.

For example, funding for "high-stakes remediation" increased from $11.6 million to $20.3 million for this year. Much of that was dedicated to summer school, as well as tutoring. And money for the "distinguished educators" initiative, which brings experts into low-performing schools to help them improve, increased from $1.7 million to $4.4 million.

The next step for the system is that, starting with the class of 2003, students will have to pass a tougher high school graduation exam.

Students until now have had to pass an 8th-grade-level exam to graduate. The new test was first administered last spring to Louisiana 10th graders, though they have several more chances to pass.

In addition, Louisiana this spring is expected to begin a new accountability program for school districts.

Each district will receive a score based on a "district-responsibility index" that assesses it on a number of criteria, including effectiveness of summer school programs, percentage of certified teachers, reduction in failure rates on the state's high-stakes test, and number of schools reaching their growth targets. The schools will be given a rating—excellent, very good, good, fair, poor, or unsatisfactory—depending on their performance.

According to results on the National Assessment of Educational Progress released last summer, 4th graders in Louisiana made significant gains in mathematics.

—ERIK W. ROBELEN

Maine

591 Public schools	$1.6 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (all revenue sources)	14% Children in poverty
17,000 Public school teachers	3% Minority students	14.7% Students with disabilities
213,000 Pre-K-12 enrollment		71,000 Children under 5

With data showing the state's children are faring well, early-learning experiences haven't been pushed.

Maine has the right to brag about impressive indicators that its children are healthy and on the path toward success in school.

The state has higher-than-average rates of immunization and below-average incidences of low-birthweight babies. And 85 percent of the state's adults say their community is a good place to raise children, according to figures published by the Maine Children's Cabinet, an interagency group of appointees of Gov. Angus King, the state's independent chief executive. Just 14 percent of its children lived in poverty in 1998, almost 5 percentage points lower than the national average that year, the most recent for which data were available.

In communities throughout Maine, "there's a very strong emphasis on the health and well-being of children," says Commissioner of Education J. Duke Albanese, who is the chairman of the cabinet. What's more, by the time they reach 4th grade, Maine's students perform at or near the top in the state-by-state component of the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

With such success, Maine hasn't been as active on early-childhood issues as some other states have. It currently provides additional funding for school districts offering two years of kindergarten for 4- and 5-year-olds. And it has an aggressive screening program for children who may have disabilities, one that Albanese credits for intervention efforts that help children avoid special education once they enter school.

About 60 of the state's 285 districts offer preschool or two-year kindergarten programs, serving a total of almost 1,000 4-year-olds. The state pays about half the costs to run the programs, according to Yellow Light Breen, the department of education's director of special projects.

The schools also are steadily increasing the number of all-day kindergartens. In 1997-98, 10 percent of kindergartners attended an all-day program. By 2000-01, almost one-third of the state's 14,300 kindergartners attended full-day sessions.

"Once we can find some creative ways to get facilities," Albanese says, "we'll have full-day kindergarten" statewide.

Outside of schools, the state's department of human services has offered a series of incentives to improve early-childhood learning. Families who enroll children in accredited programs are eligible for a state income-tax credit in addition to the same benefit from the federal government.

To become accredited, a child-care center or preschool must have workers who complete a series of 180 continuing education hours designed by the state's early-childhood officials. The goal is to raise the quality of programs by improving the skills of the people who work with children, according to Carolyn T. Drugge, the director of the office of child care and Head Start at the human-services department.

"This state is fairly progressive in many ways in trying to support professional development in our field," says Gretchen A. Greenberg, an education specialist for Child Care Connections, a Portland-based referral center.

Like many states, however, Maine needs to find ways to raise child-care workers' wages before it can ensure every program has a high-quality staff, Greenberg adds. "It's the critical issue," she says. "Until that's addressed, we're going to be looking at instability in the field."

New Incentives

So far, school districts have undertaken preschool and full-day-kindergarten programs without many incentives from the state. That may change soon, state officials say, if the legislature adopts a new formula for distributing state aid.

Maine's funding formula favors towns that have less property wealth, based on the assumption that they are less likely than property-rich municipalities to raise the revenue that schools need. Towns that lose under the formula, however, complain that they have stretched property owners as far as they can and often have to cut school services in the face of reductions in their state grants. King's administration is preparing to propose a new funding formula this year that would pay towns based on the "essential services" they need to offer students.

The proposal would ensure that every district has enough state money to provide basic services to all students, starting with the program for 4-year-olds. Through it, state officials hope they'll be able to revolutionize traditional spending patterns.

Most districts spend more per pupil in secondary schools, Albanese says, but King's administration will propose that districts be rewarded with higher per-pupil allocations for their preschool and kindergarten enrollments.

"It's an attempt to invest far more in the early years," Albanese says. "This would turn [the current spending pattern] on its head and provide opportunities to invest far more in the early grades."

To reduce the need for special education services, Maine initiated a statewide program that has aggressively pursued the needs of infants and toddlers at risk of developing learning and other disabilities. The program pools state general education funds with federal special education money to serve the children, starting at birth, who are referred by parents, care providers, and medical professionals.

By reaching 6,200 children and providing extra services before they enter school, the state has managed to head off the need for special education later. In the 1999-2000 school year, 432 children—out of about 1,100 from the program who were entering kindergarten that year—did not need an individualized education plan as required under federal special education law.

Local Testing Authority

In an action they hope will help older children in Maine, legislators passed a law in 2001 that requires each of the state's districts to create its own system of exit exams.

The batteries of tests must measure whether students achieve the content knowledge and skills mandated by the Maine Learning Results, the standards adopted in 1997. The new law also requires that the exams include a mixture of performance assessments, portfolios, and projects—with as little use of standardized tests as possible. The testing programs must be in place by 2007.

"There has to be a mix of measures that they choose," Albanese says. "They can't just be standardized tests."

Starting in the 2002-03 school year, meanwhile, Maine will become a testing ground for the impact of technology in education. Last year, the legislature set up an endowment to buy every 7th grader a laptop computer for use in school. The endowment has enough money to pay for the program for several years, and state officials plan to raise money for a permanent endowment so every middle schooler has the same access to laptops.

—DAVID J. HOFF

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	25%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	32%
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	38%
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	37%
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	36%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	42%
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	32%
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	C
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	D
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	B+
Equity	C-

COMMENT: An aggressive state program helps infants and toddlers with disabilities get off to a good start. A proposal to rethink the school funding formula could provide more money for early education more generally. Districts have until 2007 to devise their own systems of exit exams, geared to state standards. Starting in 2002-03, every 7th grader will receive a laptop computer for use in school, paid for through an endowment. The state now awards teachers who earn national certification its highest-level licensure.

* GRADES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. † indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

Maryland

1,337 Public schools	$6.6 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures *(all revenue sources)*	6.9% Children in poverty
54,000 Public school teachers	45.7% Minority students	13.1% Students with disabilities
853,000 Pre-K-12 enrollment		353,000 Children under 5

New school-readiness survey renews aggressive efforts to improve early-childhood education.

With just two in five Maryland children fully prepared to tackle the rigors of kindergarten, according to a recent survey on school readiness, early-education initiatives are at the top of many state leaders' agendas. Even so, some legislators and others say the state is moving too slowly.

"Investments in early-childhood education are the best we can make," argues Nancy S. Grasmick, the Maryland state schools superintendent. "We're spending $328 million in state and federal money on remediation, when every dollar invested in early childhood is a dollar returned."

State officials and researchers at the University of Michigan created the survey to help inform budget decisions and improve services for young children. Over a six-week period in fall 2000, teachers of 23,000 kindergartners statewide observed student learning in seven categories: physical development, social and personal skills, language and literacy, mathematical thinking, scientific thinking, social studies, and art. The findings from the Work Sampling System were released in February 2001 .

Grasmick, who spent much of the past year campaigning for funding for early-childhood education, including all-day kindergarten, says she was not surprised by the readiness survey's results.

But "it was a sobering moment" for those who doubted such widespread deficiencies existed, she says.

Maryland's focus on early-childhood education is not new.

Two blueprints for early-childhood education put together by the state education department in the late 1990s—"The Maryland Model for School Readiness" and "Every Child Achieving: A Plan for Meeting the Needs of the Individual Learner"—included an array of recommendations for improving school readiness and early-childhood education.

Since then, Grasmick and other state leaders have worked to phase in several of those recommendations. Among them are new strategies to better coordinate child-care and early-learning programs with elementary education; new professional-development opportunities for providers; new standards for early-care and early-education programs that align the state's early-learning standards with those from Head Start and the National Association for the Education of Young Children; and new financial incentives for early-childhood programs that maintain high standards and promote educators' professional growth.

For example, under the state's new child-care credentialing system, adopted in July 2001, the state's 46,000 child-care workers can earn bonuses that increase with their level of training. The state will pay to train workers in programs serving poor children. And family-based-care programs and child-care centers that serve low-income families can earn extra money if they work to get their programs accredited.

Linda Heisner, the executive director of the Maryland Child Care Administration, says the credentialing and reimbursement system is the most comprehensive change in the state's early-childhood care in years.

"Quality is increasing across the board," she says. The changes put Maryland "on the cutting edge of states in terms of early care," she adds.

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	22%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	29%
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	26%
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	28%
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	29%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	31%
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	23%
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	A
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	C
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	B
Equity	D-

COMMENT: A new credentialing and reimbursement system provides incentives for child-care workers to pursue education and for programs to seek national accreditation. The legislature provided $11 million in 2001 to certify child-care programs and expand services for low-income families. But the governor balked at providing state funding for full-day kindergarten. Students' scores on end-of-course exams will appear on their high school transcripts beginning with the 2002 graduating class.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1999-00 data, the most recent available. ? indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

"All-day kindergarten would be a big asset, as would universal preschool. A state as wealthy and progressive as Maryland should have these programs."

MARK K. SHRIVER
Democratic State Delegate

A Level Field

Education department officials say their goal is to make good programs in child care and early learning a basic part of every child's education.

"We've had two major strategies over the past few years: working to expand and improve existing programs ... and improving credentialing for programs and staff," says Rolf Grafwallner, the head of early learning for the state education department.

All-day kindergarten and preschool are among the programs the state has worked to expand.

In 2001, a number of state lawmakers, school leaders, educators, and health officials asked Gov. Parris N. Glendening, a Democrat, to seek money to pay for all-day kindergarten in districts that wanted it. But citing, among other concerns, the high cost of a full-day plan, he decided not to back the proposal.

According to state estimates, full-day kindergarten would cost Maryland $60 million over three years. While only about one-third of the state's elementary schools offer all-day kindergarten, districts are encouraged to use local money and portions of state funds for such programs.

In the fiscal 2001 budget, $19 million was earmarked for K-3 improvements, and school districts had the option of using their portions of those funds to phase in full-day programs. An additional $11 million was directed to certify child-care programs and expand the state's Judith P. Hoyer Early Child Care Centers. The so-called Judy Centers, named after the late wife of U.S. Rep. Steny Hoyer, D-Md., offer educational and social services to low-income families.

Maryland provides for only a limited amount of prekindergarten instruction, according to Grafwallner. In the 2000-01 school year, for example, fewer than 11,000 children were enrolled in state-financed prekindergarten, called the Extended Elementary Education Program, or EEEP.

Although each district's enrollment policies and practices determine who may participate in the

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program, state regulations require that certain children be eligible—those who have limited English proficiency, are homeless, have been enrolled in Head Start or Even Start programs, or have special health or social circumstances. Most districts provide matching funds for the state program through federal Title I aid, local money, or additional state aid.

Even while commending the state for the strides it's made in early-childhood education in the past few years, proponents of early education say Maryland still falls short of where it should be.

"There's been much more of a concerted effort around early child care in the past couple of years," says Louise Corwin, the executive director of the Maryland Business Roundtable's Ready at Five Partnership, a group pushing for more state and local spending on programs for young children and their families. "But until we can say that every child in Maryland is growing up in a nurturing environment, and that all children who are interested can participate in quality child-care programs, and all children are prepared to meet state standards," the task isn't complete, she argues.

"We've made great progress in the area of early-childhood education, but efforts are uneven," adds state Delegate Mark K. Shriver, a Democrat. Shriver is a co-chairman of the legislature's joint committee on children, families, and learning, which requested the now-annual kindergarten-readiness report and asked the governor to back funding for all-day kindergarten.

"Early-childhood education used to be viewed as kindergarten through 3rd grade, but the research tells us it's much earlier," he says. "All-day kindergarten would be a big asset, as would universal preschool. A state as wealthy and progressive as Maryland should have these programs."

Textbooks, Gun Safety

A panel appointed by the governor recommended in November that the state spend an additional $1.1 billion on K-12 education and direct a greater portion of its school funding to poorer counties to ensure their schools meet state standards for student achievement. The Commission on Education, Finance, Equity, and Excellence, which was also charged with consolidating the more than 50 programs through which state aid is administered, was expected to release its final report late last year.

Its proposal comes during tight fiscal times for the state. In October, the governor announced a $205 million cut in the state's $21.2 billion fiscal 2002 budget. He largely spared the $3.4 billion dedicated to schools, which was a 5 percent increase over 2001.

For fiscal 2002, lawmakers reduced funding for a program that uses state money to buy textbooks for private schools. The legislature supplied $5 million for the program, $1 million less than last year, and $3 million less than Glendening requested.

The governor vetoed legislation last year that would have made Maryland the first state to require gun-safety courses for all public school students. "I have reservations about explicitly sanctioning, and arguably encouraging, the sending of busloads of 13-year-old boys and girls to a shooting range to handle real guns and ammunition," Glendening said in a letter explaining his veto. The bill would have allowed, with local school board approval, middle and high school students to travel to local shooting ranges for safety instruction.

Education officials continue to field criticism for the state's reconstitution program. The 7-year-old program, which identifies and provides assistance to failing schools, has most recently been cited as failing to do enough to help schools on the state's "reconstitution eligible" list. More than 100 schools are currently on the state watch list—85 in Baltimore and 15 in Prince George's County. Despite more than $47 million in state aid, only a few schools have raised achievement enough to move off the list.

In state testing news, students who entered 9th grade in fall 2001 will be the first to have their scores on rigorous end-of-course exams appear on high school transcripts.

-KERRY A. WHITE

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Massachusetts

1,898 Public schools	$9.1 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (*all revenue sources*)	13.8% Children in poverty
79,000 Public school teachers	23.4% Minority students	16.6% Students with disabilities
985,000 Pre-K-12 enrollment		397,000 Children under 5

Child-care advocates hope to link early-learning initiatives to ongoing education improvement efforts.

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	33%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	32%
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	43%
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	42%
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	37%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	36%
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	31%
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	A-
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	B
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	B-
Equity	D

COMMENT: The state has stringent licensing standards and the biggest number of nationally accredited child-care centers in the nation. Students in the class of 2003 must pass tests in English and math to graduate; a new appeals process is available for those who fail. The state won't administer a high school history test aligned with its standards in 2002. Massachusetts dropped some course requirements for prospective teachers; instead, teachers must pass a content-area test, which raised the state's grade in this area from a C last year to a B this year. The state also initiated a teacher-induction program.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. — indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

Advocates for children in Massachusetts hope to seize on what they see as a critical opportunity to move early-childhood education to the fore of the state's education agenda. With some of the highest licensing standards for early child care, and the most child-care centers with national accreditation of any state, Massachusetts has shown signs of making its commitment to early childhood an even more important part of its efforts to improve education.

The state board of education has approved draft preschool standards, which include guidelines for a curriculum based on state frameworks. The new guidelines are intended to help early-childhood programs offer developmentally appropriate preparation for students entering kindergarten and 1st grade.

A governor's commission on early-childhood education and school readiness was expected to release a report late last year.

Strategies for Children, a Boston-based nonprofit group that has mobilized support for a bill introduced in the legislature that would provide access to high-quality education for all 3- to 5-year-olds, has been aggressively pushing an "Early Education for All" campaign. The goal is to engage the business, education, labor, and religious communities in a way that increases public awareness of early-childhood issues.

Buoyed by studies that show children who have been in high-quality early-learning environments perform better in school than other youngsters do, the advocacy group hopes to marry the interests of early-childhood educators with the state's continuing work to raise students' academic performance. The improvement drive centers on an accountability system ushered in by the state's 1993 education reform law.

"We can't afford not to invest in young children," says Margaret Blood, a longtime children's advocate and the director of Strategies for Children.

Strong Commitment

Massachusetts has done much to support and promote early-childhood programs, she says, but it must make an even stronger commitment to provide training and better pay for providers of such programs. Because Massachusetts has already put a big emphasis on early childhood, Blood says, advocates should not try to reinvent the wheel.

"We don't want to create anything new," she says. "We want to build on the existing infrastructure."

About 70 percent of Massachusetts children under 5 come from families in which both parents work outside the home. Some 6,000 children ages 3 to 5 are on a waiting list for subsidized child care.

A December 2000 report from the Urban Institute indicated that Massachusetts families pay an average of $370 a month—the highest amount in the nation—for child care.

Money for subsidized child care for working families, which comes through the Massachusetts Office of Child Care Services, has increased substantially over the past several years. Combining all early-care and education programs, funding has climbed from about $154 million in 1994 to $634 million in 2001.

Needs Still to Be Met

But advocates say that the state still needs to increase access to first-rate child care and preschool. The state education department estimates that about 27,000 infants and toddlers in families earning less than 100 percent of the state median income are still in need of financial aid to pay for early-childhood care.

The state's major preschool program, Community Partnerships for Children, has expanded dramatically in the past five years, with funding increasing from $12.9 million in 1995 to $104 million in fiscal 2002. The program serves preschool-age children in public school, Head Start, community-based child care, and family child care.

For children to be eligible for the program, both parents, or a single parent, must be working at least part time, and the family's income must be under 125 percent of the state median income for a family of its size. All parents pay a fee on a sliding scale.

To help ensure high standards, programs serving children through the Community Partnerships for Children Program must seek accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Massachusetts has both the highest proportion and the highest number of nationally accredited child-care centers in the country.

But retaining early-childhood educators and child-care providers remains a challenge because of low salaries. The early-childhood advisory council that makes recommendations to the state school board reports a "severe staffing crisis" and has called for salary increases and more teacher training.

MCAS Progress

Along with its attention to early-childhood education, Massachusetts in 2001 changed the requirements for passing the state accountability exams, the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System. The state board of education voted to replace the world history section of the state's 10th grade MCAS exam with a test of U.S. history. Students in the class of 2003 must pass the MCAS in mathematics and English in order to graduate. The exams have been the subject of widely publicized student walkouts and other protests.

But the MCAS results released in October showed dramatic improvements that many observers say will change the tenor of debate about the tests. Seventy-three percent of the 10th graders who participated in both the English language arts and mathematics tests passed those exams. In urban school districts, 59 percent of the students who participated in both those exams scored high enough to earn a diploma. That compares with only 38 percent of students from urban districts in 2000.

And in vocational and technical schools, where some of the strongest criticism of the exams has been aired, 46 percent of students who took the math and English exams passed, compared with only 20 percent in 2000.

Achieve Inc., a national organization that advocates standards-based education policies, issued a report just days before the MCAS results were released that called Massachusetts' system of academic standards and assessments a national model. The report called the 10th grade exams students must now pass to graduate "rigorous but reasonable."

While even opponents of the exams praised the statewide improvements, groups like the Civil Rights Project at Harvard University say enthusiasm for those better scores must not distract attention from the exams' impact on minority students. Sixty-three percent of the state's African-American students and 71 percent of its Hispanic students, the organization reports, are at risk of not passing the MCAS and thus of being denied a high school diploma. —JOHN GEWERTZ

Michigan

3,606 Public schools	$13.7 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (all revenue sources)	15.4% Children in poverty
95,000 Public school teachers	23.7% Minority students	4.8% Students with disabilities
1.7 million Pre-K-12 enrollment		672,000 Children under 5

The state's plans to expand early-childhood programs fell prey to budget cuts, putting districts in a tight spot.

What a difference a year makes. In 2000, early-childhood educators and advocates in the Great Lakes State enjoyed their best year ever. Buoyed by a budget surplus, the legislature that year approved nearly $240 million for new and expanded programs and services for young children and their families.

But the national economic downturn hit Michigan hard last year, prompting lawmakers to take back some of what they had given.

Faced with a possible shortfall of $250 million to $350 million in the state school aid budget for the 2002 fiscal year, lawmakers canceled plans to expand public preschool programs from a half-day to a full day, eliminated funds for state-financed summer school for children leaving grades 1-4, and trimmed $7 million from a $50 million program targeted to early-elementary students with reading problems.

The picture is gloomier for the next fiscal year, which is the final year of a three-year budget that was approved by the legislature in better economic times. In September, third-term Gov. John Engler, a Republican, vetoed all K-12 funding for that year that is not required by law. His action effectively wipes out all the preschool programs launched or expanded in 2000 unless the legislature votes this year to put them back in.

Keith E. Myers, the executive director of the Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children, says early-childhood-education advocates now will essentially have to start from scratch.

"We don't have that commitment of a third year anymore for those programs, and we just have to go out and lobby again to get them," he says.

Some Programs Preserved

Still, lawmakers did preserve funding for the All Students Achieve Program-Parent Involvement in Education, a fledgling, $45 million initiative aimed at providing home visits, developmental screenings, preschool referrals, and other services to families of infants and toddlers. Advocates said the program was important because it requires school districts, public agencies, and local nonprofit organizations to collaborate in planning the new services.

The pared-down budget for this fiscal year also kept intact $85.5 million in basic funding for the state's long-standing Michigan School Readiness Program. The program provides half-day preschool for 4-year-olds who, for a variety of reasons, are considered at risk for failing in school. The extra $25 million set aside to keep preschools open all day, however, fell victim to the budget ax.

Lindy Buch, the supervisor of early-childhood and parenting for the Michigan Department of Education, says it's unclear whether some of the school districts that are expanding their preschool programs or gearing up to help provide new, home-based services to the families of infants and toddlers will continue on their own.

"Some of these districts are squeezed, and they've had to make some choices between whether you provide Advanced Placement classes for a small number of high school students or you reduce class sizes in elementary school," says Buch. "Whether they'll continue with new preschool programs, I don't know."

The rollbacks disappointed advocates because they came so close on the heels of their hard-won victories in 2000.

"Michigan in the last several years has been undergoing a process of culturnl change in terms of bringing heightened awareness around the importance of early childhood and child care," says Sharon Claytor Peters, who heads Michigan's Children, an advocacy group. Through the readiness program; the federal Head Start program, and federal Title I funds that support preschool programs, state officials estimate that roughly half of Michigan's 4-year-olds are enrolled in publicly supported preschools.

Teachers in state-subsidized preschools are required to hold an elementary-teaching license with an endorsement in early-childhood education, a qualification that is comparatively high by most states' standards.

But the bar is much lower for employees of private child-care programs, according to children's advocates and state administrators.

"The buildings are safe, but the people don't have to have any training," Buch says.

To enhance the skills of those workers, the state last year launched an effort similar to North Carolina's Teacher Education And Compensation Helps, or TEACH, program. Drawing on state, federal, and private resources, the program provides tuition scholarships, as well as bonuses and pay raises, to child-care workers who continue their education.

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	29%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	28%
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	33%
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	37%
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	28%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	?
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	?
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	C
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	C-
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	A-
Equity	C-

COMMENT: Major funding has gone into learning for children from birth to age 5, and a state-financed preschool program has a long record of success. A bleak revenue picture in 2001, however, led lawmakers to make sizable cuts to their three-year budget for schools, including money to provide new services for young children and their families. The state is revising its accountability system and did not release school ratings last year, dropping its grade from a B in 2001 to a C in 2002 for standards and accountability. New ratings are expected in fall 2002.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. ? indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

Bonus and Testing Plans on Hold

To policymakers, early-childhood programs were a logical place to make cuts because they were the newest. Gov. Engler and the legislature also wanted to protect a planned hike in the base per-pupil amount that the state gives to public schools.

Under the original three-year budget, that base funding was set to grow from $6,000 per pupil in fiscal 2001 to $6,500 this fiscal year to $6,700 next year. The increase was designed to narrow gaps between the state's highest- and lowest-spending districts.

Under the revised budget, districts will still get their $6,500 payments this fiscal year because lawmakers drew on the state's rainy-day fund. All bets are off, however, for next year.

The governor also used his veto pen to restore $8 million in funds for the Golden Apple Awards, an initiative he proposed in February 2001 when he told lawmakers in his State of the State Address that "the state with the best education system wins." The program awards $50,000 bonuses to top-performing schools.

In other education-related developments last year, the state's new schools chief, Thomas D. Watkins, scrapped a school accreditation system that the governor had championed.

The system had yet to issue its first ratings, but Watkins, a Democrat appointed by the state's elected school board, said he wanted to "reconstruct" it because it relied too heavily on scores from state tests.

The state had more success with a 2-year-old, $110 million initiative to give laptop computers to precollegiate teachers. Before it ended last year, an estimated 90,000 teachers received computers through the program.

Michigan also issued a first-of-its-kind report card on school districts in May 2001. Created through a contract with Standard & Poor's, the Wall Street analysts known best for evaluating the financial health of businesses and governments, the online report cards contain district-level information on everything from test scores to spending patterns to per-capita income.

Finally, the legislature put off a 3-year-old debate over whether to allow universities to charter more independent public schools by handing the problem off to a new state commission. The panel may issue its report early this year. -DEBRA VIADERO

Minnesota

2,072 Public schools	$7.2 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (all revenue sources)	15.4% Children in poverty
56,000 Public school teachers	16.1% Minority students	12.5% Students with disabilities
847,000 Pre-K-12 enrollment		330,000 Children under 5

Budget battles nearly shut down state government; early-childhood initiatives fall by the wayside.

In a political battle that threatened to shut down the state government in 2001, Gov. Jesse Ventura refused to sign any spending bills until the legislature delivered a substantial package of tax cuts.

The governor eventually got his way, but not without a price. Other policy drives—including efforts to revamp early-childhood education—fell by the wayside.

One of those failed legislative bids was Ventura's own proposal to consolidate the state's major child-care programs: the Minnesota Family Investment Program, Transition-Year Child Care, and the Basic Sliding-Fee Child Care program. All three are designed to help low- and moderate-income families cover the cost of child care or preschool.

Funding for the consolidated program would have been based on a forecast of demand. State education officials say the governor's proposal would have targeted money to the neediest children and families, improved service, cut program administration, and put an end to waiting lists.

But many lawmakers saw things differently.

"In addition to persistent philosophical differences over the role of government in the lives of families and young children, the primary policy dispute was over the forecasting component of the governor's consolidation proposal," says John S. Breckenridge, an executive budget officer with the state finance department. "Advocates believed this was the key to achieving the desired policy outcomes. Opponents believed this opened the door to uncontrolled growth in program expenditures."

Conservative legislators balked at language that they believe would have created a dramatically expanded entitlement program. Other lawmakers argued the governor had failed to include enough money for the consolidation plan in his budget proposal.

"We were proposing a go-slow approach," says Rep. Barb Sykora, the Republican chairwoman of the House Family and Early-Childhood-Education Committee. "To go from a welfare program to an entitlement program that would have included [families with earnings of] up to 300 percent of the poverty level—we just didn't think it was wise."

So, in the final days of the regular 2001 legislative session, lawmakers passed a $544 million biennial budget for early-childhood and family programs that included neither the consolidation plan nor any new state money for existing programs. For fiscal 2002, the state spent $10.4 million for its school-readiness program, which prepares children ages 3 to 5 for kindergarten.

Ventura, elected under the Reform Party banner in 1998 and now an Independent, vetoed the package the first time it came to his desk. But the second time around—after his victory on tax reductions in a tumultuous special session—he signed the same bill without a fight.

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	34%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	40%
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	35%
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	42%
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	36%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	37%
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	25%
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	D-
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	C
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	B+
Equity	B-

COMMENT: Proposals to consolidate early-childhood programs, increase funding, and provide incentives for child-care workers to pursue further education fell by the wayside last year. A new school funding formula will provide more help for needy districts, and a tax on business property is expected to bring in more revenue for schools. The legislature enacted a pilot program for districts to base teachers' pay on performance. Lawmakers put off any changes in academic standards. The state is administering new high school tests this year.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. ? indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

Separately, the state education department offered the legislature an even broader plan for an integrated system of services for early-childhood care and education. The proposal—which also failed to be enacted—called for combining resources at the local level.

"The overall goal is a well-connected array of services that give parents a choice of programs to meet their families' needs in every Minnesota community and promote positive outcomes for children," says Cherie Kotilinek, the education department's acting manager for early-childhood programs. "Some [programs] would be universally available. Families in which children have greater needs could receive more intensive or specialized services."

Despite some interest, lawmakers didn't adopt any legislation on the plan last session. But the department will do what it can in the meantime to support local efforts to integrate early-childhood programs, Kotilinek says.

More Training, Better Pay

Some advocates say the biggest problem for early-childhood education in Minnesota is a lack of qualified workers. Poor pay and inadequate training requirements are to blame, they assert. "Early-childhood education has not benefited from the enormous economic prosperity we have in our state. Quite the opposite, it's been a hardship," says Anita Segador Beaton, the director of the Minnesota Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development, a division of the Minnesota Association for the Education of Young Children.

"Because of low wages, we have workers leaving early child care in droves," Beaton says. "We have child-care centers literally going out of business because they cannot hire staff."

Following the lead of states like California and North Carolina, Beaton's group pushed for passage of legislation in 2001 to provide training scholarships for early-child-care professionals, as well as wage increases and bonuses for those who complete college-level training and stay in the field.

"But that was soundly defeated here," Beaton says. The loss came despite two $1 million pledges from private foundations, contingent on a $2 million match from the state legislature. While the House and the Senate adjourned without appropriating money for the proposed program, lawmakers still have until June to take advantage of the foundations' offers.

Some conservatives, however, question the wisdom of wage subsidies and argue that the child-care industry isn't the only sector struggling to find qualified workers today.

"Pay has been increasing because the cost we're paying per family subsidy has gone up from about $5,000 to more than $8,000," Sykora says. "The governor put no new money in his budget proposal, and there are other programs I'd prefer money go into than wage subsidies."

K-12 Financing Overhaul

Early-child-care advocates were not the only ones to suffer disappointments. Education interest groups also heavily criticized the 2002-2003 biennial budget for K-12 for failing to adequately invest in schools, even though it did raise school spending above levels in the previous biennial budget.

The omnibus tax bill the legislature passed included a provision that shifts the basic costs of precollegiate education to the state. Before passage of the new law, the state paid about 60 percent of the general costs of K-12 education, and the rest was financed through local property taxes.

The new law includes an equalization formula that gives extra aid to school districts in property-poor areas. Beginning in fiscal 2003, those districts without voter-supported levies for excess costs such as capital expenses will receive an additional $415 per student from the state. And, in cases where districts have levies that raise less than $415 per student from local taxpayers, the state will chip in the necessary dollars to bring them up to that amount.

Lawmakers approved a modest budget increase for K-12 schools in fiscal 2002 and 2003.

The $8.7 billion allocated for precollegiate education over the biennium is up by 8.7 percent, or $710 million, from the previous two-year budget, according to the governor's office. -DARCIA HARRIS BOWMAN

Mississippi

875 Public schools	$2.6 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (all revenue sources)	21.6% Children in poverty
31,000 Public school teachers	52.4% Minority students	12.4% Students with disabilities
499,000 Pre-K-12 enrollment		204,000 Children under 5

With little money to go around, education efforts for the state's young children are low on the priority list.

In financially strapped Mississippi, early-childhood education has long taken a back seat to other needs. Faced with severe budget constraints, state legislators in 2001 chose to approve teacher-pay raises instead of five pilot prekindergarten programs, one for each congressional district.

An advisory group charged with making sure children are ready to start school is working to find less expensive alternatives.

The Early Childhood Services Interagency Coordinating Council, formed in 2000 and representing education and health agencies, gathers data and meets quarterly to talk about sharing resources and promoting high standards for programs that serve young children and their families. Its first report, issued in 2001, said 122,817 children statewide were enrolled in child-care and early-education programs.

To nurture those youngsters, Mississippi's 152 school districts compete for $1.5 million in block grants that the legislature appropriates annually from roughly $445 million in federal education aid. The state itself provides no money for early-childhood education aside from that required to access federal funds. Most of the federal money pays for materials that help prepare children for school.

For example, the "Every Child a Reader" program, aimed at parents of 4- and 5-year-olds enrolling in preschool, introduces concepts of print and phonics through audio recordings and videotapes.

The Bridges program, meanwhile, gives parents, educators, and caregivers practical information, resources, and training tips for working with children from birth to age 5.

Providing such help to everyone who needs it in the poor, predominantly rural state gains particular importance because Mississippi's illiteracy rates are among the country's highest.

While districts must provide kindergarten, attending kindergarten is not mandatory in Mississippi. Nonetheless, more than 90 percent of 5-year-olds are enrolled, according to Cathy Grace, the director of the Early Childhood Institute at Mississippi State University.

'A Hard Issue'

But about 20 percent of preschool-age children statewide still are not enrolled in any type of child-care or education program, increasing the chance of learning problems once school starts, says Bonita Potter, the director of reading, early childhood, and language arts for the state education department.

"We try to track them based on the birthrate, but that's still an estimation at best," she says. "This is a hard issue for us right now."

Mississippi has only recently trained an eye on the quality of its child care. In 2001, two groups conducted the state's first study of the quality of child-care programs in which Temporary Assistance for Needy Families grants were awarded to 174 licensed child-care centers in six of the state's poorest counties. Of those, 100 were randomly selected for evaluation of such factors as staff-to-child ratios, age-appropriate classroom supplies, and education services for parents.

The study, conducted by Mississippi State University's Early Childhood Institute and the Civitan Center's Regional Early Childhood Team, will be used to track whether the TANF money makes a difference. Findings were not yet available at the end of 2001. The study is paid for with an $88,000 grant from the state's human-services department.

Meanwhile, a close partnership—formalized in 1998 with a memorandum of understanding—between the state education department and the Mississippi Head Start Association appears to be improving coordination between preschool and kindergarten teachers.

Nearly 24,600 children ages 3 and 4 and roughly 670 children from birth to age 3 attend the state's 21 Head Start programs.

Lynne Masters, the director of the state's Head Start collaboration office, says a new set of preschool benchmarks designed by the state in 2001 will increase the number of children prepared for kindergarten.

But training continues to be an issue. Masters and other advocates say that based on evaluations of child-care workers, the state at least must redirect some money to ensure the workers are qualified enough to help children meet the new benchmarks.

Mississippi permits employees in child-care centers and family group homes to begin work with no prior training in early-childhood education.

In contrast, preschool teachers employed by public schools must earn a certificate to teach kindergarten through grade 4, with 18 hours of supplemental training in early-childhood education. In 2000, the state approved a license for preschool and kindergarten teachers only.

Until September 2001, the state had training clinics but no specific license for teaching preschool children with special needs.

The University of Southern Mississippi started offering a master's degree in early intervention in 1998, but because no license was awarded at the end of the two-year program, graduates were having trouble landing jobs in public schools.

The new licensing program is overseen jointly by the university's school of family consumer sciences and its department of curriculum, instruction, and special education, with support from the Institute for Disability Studies housed on campus. Just 10 students were enrolled in mid-2001, but administrators expect more interest now that the license is available. In addition, the same school offers a Child Development Associate credential program for child-care workers.

The state health department sponsors a program called First Steps, which provides services to children from birth to age 3 who are at risk of having developmental delays.

Accountability and Computers

For older students, beginning with the class of 2003, the state is phasing in end-of-course tests required for graduation, eventually replacing the Functional Literacy Exam.

The change is part of a revamped assessment system for all students and now includes diagnostic testing between kindergarten and 2nd grade. Previously, such tests began in grade 4.

A new accountability system passed by the legislature in 2000 takes effect soon. Individual schools will be rated on test scores and other measurable outcomes starting in fall 2003.

The previous system made it impossible for high-achieving schools in low-performing districts to get recognition, while the problems of low-performing schools in high-achieving districts were easily hidden.

The state continues its work on placing an Internet-accessible computer in every classroom by the end of 2002. More than 75 percent of classrooms now have such access.

—ROBIN L. FLANIGAN

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	9%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	8%
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	14%
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	15%
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	18%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	19%
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	11%
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	D+
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	C
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	D+
Equity	C

COMMENT: This cash-poor state doesn't spend any of its own money on early-childhood education, aside from that required to access federal funds. In 2001, legislators approved teacher-pay raises instead of piloting prekindergarten programs. The adequacy of pay and training for preschool teachers is also an issue. In 2000, the state approved a new license for preschool and kindergarten teachers only. For older students, the state is phasing in end-of-course tests for graduation, beginning with the class of 2003. A new accountability system will rate schools starting in fall 2003.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. † indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

Missouri

2,258 Public schools	$5.4 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (all revenue sources)	15.6% Children in poverty
64,000 Public school teachers	20.3% Minority students	14.7% Students with disabilities
897,000 Pre-K-12 enrollment		370,000 Children under 5

The state channels much of its tobacco-settlement money to early-childhood programs.

While Missouri education officials and lawmakers spent much of 2001 focused on a possible state takeover of the troubled Kansas City school district and a study of how to improve their state's school finance system, they also trained attention and funding on the early years of students' lives.

During their 2001 session, state lawmakers approved a plan by Gov. Bob Holden, a Democrat, to dedicate a large portion of the state's proceeds from the national tobacco settlement to early-childhood education. The decision followed three years of debate over what to do with the windfall.

More early-childhood initiatives are on the agenda in 2002. For instance, state education officials are preparing to unveil the first-ever literacy standards in Missouri for the prekindergarten years. Educators are also looking toward drafting what they're calling social standards for young children, a set of social skills that pupils should have for their age levels.

And the results of a pilot program that began last year to train teachers to gauge children's readiness for kindergarten has given educators confidence that early-childhood initiatives and parental involvement are key in preparing children for success in school, education officials say.

Missouri has long been on the cutting edge in early-childhood education, having made the issue a priority over the past three decades. In 1972, the first Missouri state director of early education was appointed, and the state board of education released a position paper affirming the impact of children's early learning on later school success.

Missouri became the pilot location in 1981 for the now widely offered Parents As Teachers program, which pairs trained parent-educators with parents to instruct them on what to expect through the stages of their children's development. The parents in the program meet in groups, where they share experiences and information. The program also offers screening of the children's overall development, health, hearing, and vision to provide early detection of potential problems.

The state reports that more than 130,000 children between the ages of 1 and 5 participated in developmental, health, or prekindergarten screening in the 1999-2000 school year. Nearly half of the high-needs families in the state participated in the local PAT programs during the 1999-2000 school year.

"To the extent that we've been able to reach families, it's been extremely successful," Ruth Flynn, the state's director for early-childhood education, says of PAT.

"It's a tremendous investment, [but] it pays off very well in the long run."

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	23%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	22%
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	35%
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	36%
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	29%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	29%
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	17%
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	B
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	C
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	C
Equity	D+

COMMENT: Lawmakers dedicated money from a national tobacco settlement to early-childhood education in 2001. The state also unveiled literacy standards for the prekindergarten years and a set of competencies for early-childhood educators. More districts are offering full-day kindergarten since the state revised its school funding formula to pay for it. The Kansas City district has until June to improve student performance and avoid a state takeover. Starting in 2002-03, districts must publish information on schools.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. ? indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

"To the extent that we've been able to reach families, [the Parents as Teachers Program] has been extremely successful. It's a tremendous investment, [but] it pays off very well in the long run."

RUTH FLYNN
State Director
Early-Childhood Education

Funding for Missouri's PAT program has more than doubled since 1992-93. In fiscal 2001, the state spent $30 million on it. And the legislature, which voted to use $14.4 million from the national tobacco settlement for early-childhood programs, allotted $6 million to expand PAT.

A Rise in Full-Day Kindergarten

More and more districts are offering full-day kindergarten in the state, since Missouri revised its school funding formula several years ago to pay for such programs. Now, districts are paid on a per-pupil basis through the basic state aid formula.

In the 2000-01 school year, 508 of the state's 524 school districts offered full-day kindergarten, an increase of 245 districts from 1992-93. About 78 percent of Missouri's 64,000 kindergartners now attend full-day programs, compared with less than 30 percent during the 1992-93 school year.

The state is also making strides toward devising standards for pre-K literacy, as a measurement tool for teachers to determine whether young students are reading at the appropriate level.

"The standards will be used all over the state in child-care centers and Head Start [centers], so we all in our state are working toward the same goals," Flynn says. "We also do a lot with professional development to make sure our teachers are qualified to reach the goals."

In June 2001, the state education department awarded $4.4 million in grants to districts to begin or expand their early-childhood-education programs for 3- and 4-year-olds. The program, called the Missouri Preschool Project, was authorized by state law in 1998 and was financed at $14.5 million for fiscal 2002. The grants to 23 school districts and 20 private schools range from $62,000 to $190,000. Eleven other private preschools received smaller grants to support training for the staff.

"We are continuing the statewide effort to give Missouri families and children greater access to high-quality preschool programs," Holden said in June 2001 when he announced the grants. "This is bringing better services to many smaller districts and rural communities."

Under the late Gov. Mel Carnahan, the state commissioned a study in 1998 to examine what makes children successful in school, using data about kindergartners' preschool experiences and access to health care and their resulting readiness for kindergarten.

The study, called the School Entry Assessment Project, was released in 1999 and looked at 3,500

students from different socioeconomic backgrounds at 80 schools. The results showed that the children with some kind of prekindergarten educational experience fared better than other students.

"The highest-performing children participate in Parents As Teachers and preschool or center care," the report said.

Not only has the state focused on preparing young children for kindergarten, but officials are also making sure preschool teachers are ready for the classroom.

Though the state has long required teachers to be certified, officials from Missouri and Kansas wrote core-competency documents in 2001 spelling out what preschool teachers need to know. The Core Competencies for Early Education in Kansas and Missouri say competence should be shown in eight areas: child growth and development; learning environment and curriculum; child observation and assessment; families and communities; health, safety, and nutrition; interactions with children; program planning and development; and professional development and leadership.

Within the state, cooperation among agencies on early-childhood initiatives is a priority, Flynn says. That's why state officials established an early-childhood interagency-development team in 1996.

"We continue to meet, and we credit that cooperation for a lot of the success of the programs," Flynn says. "We all know each other, and we are all excited about each others' programs. We can refer parents to programs in other departments and specific people we know from the committee."

State Finance and a Troubled District

Missouri officials also spent much of 2001 focusing on two trouble spots: the Kansas City schools and the state's method of funding schools.

A bill that called for the immediate takeover of the 29,500-student Kansas City school district died in the legislative session.

The beleaguered district, home to one of the nation's costliest and most closely watched desegregation programs, has been given until this June to improve student performance in order to avoid a state takeover. State officials will base their decision on the results of the Missouri Assessment Program tests, which were graded over the summer of 2001, to determine the district's fate.

In May 2000, state officials determined that the district did not meet state standards despite long-standing efforts to ensure that all children, regardless of race, received equal educational opportunities there. A 1977 desegregation lawsuit filed by a group of parents has led to court-ordered improvement efforts totaling some $2 billion.

Lawmakers in 2001 also approved a resolution setting up a committee to study school finance issues, including the state aid formula, teacher salaries, and facilities. The way the state distributes money to schools has been riddled with problems for years, and questions over the system's legality have arisen. Eight years ago, a Missouri judge ordered the legislature to revamp its finance formula on the grounds that it produced funding disparities.

The system was subsequently revised, but last year, the Missouri School Boards Association released a report questioning its legality. The association said that some districts spent up to three times more per student than others, and that property-rich suburban districts still have an advantage over their poorer counterparts because Missouri's funding system relies heavily on local property taxes.

Meanwhile, Missouri lawmakers continued to look at ways to improve school accountability last year. The legislature passed a measure requiring schools to issue "report cards" providing information on their demographics, teacher salaries, and student performance on state tests. The information is currently provided for school districts as a whole, but not for individual schools.

–LISA FINE

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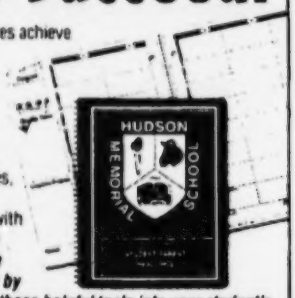

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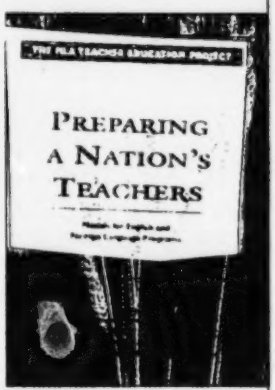

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Montana

882 Public schools	$996 million Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (all revenue sources)	22% Children in poverty
10,000 Public school teachers	13.5% Minority students	12% Students with disabilities
156,000 Pre-K-12 enrollment		55,000 Children under 5

Early-childhood initiatives are a tough sell to lawmakers in the Treasure State amid tough economic times.

Montana lawmakers, who often find it a struggle just to come up with adequate funding for K-12 education, haven't yet taken up the issue of paying for early-childhood education, advocates for young children in the state say. But many of those advocates are encouraged by some of their own efforts to improve the educational opportunities for child-care providers and persuade the legislature to back improvements in child care.

"Montana's economy hasn't done as well as other states'," says Linda Fillinger, the bureau chief for early-childhood services of Montana's health and human-services department.

Montana doesn't spend any money on preschool, except to provide the matching dollars that are required to receive federal funds to run programs such as Head Start, Fillinger says.

Promoters of early-childhood education haven't ventured to ask the legislature for money to pay for specific initiatives. But over the past couple of years, they've persuaded the legislature to make decisions that strengthen current offerings paid for with federal dollars.

For example, says Mary Jane Standaert, Montana's Head Start collaboration-project director, supporters of early-childhood education persuaded the legislature in 2001 to provide enough matching state dollars to receive the maximum amount of federal subsidies for child care in 2002. Previously, the legislature forfeited some federal dollars because it didn't provide enough matching money, Standaert says.

Also, she adds, the legislature agreed to expand the realm of child-care providers that could apply to be regulated by the state.

Early-childhood advocates had wanted legislators to require all drop-in centers in the state—for example, a health club that provides care for only part of a day—to be regulated.

Instead, the legislature made it an option for the first time for drop-in care providers to apply for the status of being regulated. Without such status, they are not eligible to apply for grants to improve facilities or for professional development.

Changing the Rules

Through the state's rule-making process, advocates for young children have recently made some other improvements in child care.

In a package of new rules that became effective in September 2000, the state began to require all child-care providers to receive eight hours of training in early-childhood education annually. Previously, only directors and staff members of child-care centers had to complete eight hours of education, and then only during their first year of employment. The new rules have extended the same education requirement to family child-care programs, which had been excluded.

The rules also raised the bar for health and safety requirements and standardized those requirements across all types of programs. For example, fire drills previously were recommended, but now they are a requirement for all programs. And while only child-care centers had to have their staffs trained in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation in the past, all child-care providers must do so now.

In February 1997, early-childhood supporters tried to get a similar set of proposals approved, but failed, says Becky Fleming-Siebenaler, the supervisor of child-care-licensing programs for Montana. "We have done better [in 2000] than in the 15 years I've been in child care," she says. "We've come a long way in improving the quality of care in Montana. It really took four years to educate people."

One of the reasons child-care proposals were rejected 4½ years ago, she explains, was because they included a plan to increase the number of workers who must be available to young children—the ratio is currently one provider for every three children under age 2.

The advocates faced a firestorm of opposition from providers who said they couldn't afford to improve the ratio, she says, and the resistance contributed to a rejection of all the proposed changes.

Fleming-Siebenaler says that in the recent round of rule-making, advocates made the political decision not to propose any change to the current ratio of child-care providers to children.

Montana child-care experts also are proud of a career-development system for child-care providers that they've devised. The system, run by the Montana Early Childhood Project, is paid for with federal Child Care and Development Funds and housed at Montana State University-Bozeman.

Child-care providers can work their way through nine levels of professional development. The federal funds also pay for an accompanying grant program, called Best Beginnings, that gives child-care providers small grants to improve the quality of their programs if they submit a plan to receive approved training and carry it out.

Low compensation of child-care providers, which results in high turnover, is a persistent problem in the state, Fillinger says. In 1999, a state study found that child-care workers earned between $5.85 and $6.87 per hour. Raising wages is hard to do, Fillinger says, because "families aren't making big money, so it's hard for them to pay more."

Building Trust

Another persistent issue, says Standaert, the Head Start collaboration-project director, is the difficulty of convincing some parents that they should send their children to Head Start. She estimates that only about 20 percent to 30 percent of eligible children participate.

A major reason that Montana residents reject Head Start is a distrust of federal programs or a desire not to depend on them, Standaert says. "They just don't want people coming into their lives," she says.

In addition, it's difficult for Head Start to provide teachers in isolated rural areas, she points out.

One Head Start program may serve several large counties with hundreds of miles between towns, making it tough to find teachers willing to travel long distances for small numbers of preschoolers.

Meanwhile, in the 2001 Montana legislative session, lawmakers struggled with how to finance schools in light of declining enrollments. They decided to keep the school funding formula as it was, but passed a law directing the state office of budget and program planning to conduct a two-year study on the matter.

The legislature increased funding from the general fund for K-12 education for 2002-2003 over the previous biennium by $25.6 million, or 2.7 percent. It also created a separate, one-time flexible account with $5 million to be distributed to schools according to a formula over a two-year period.

—MARY ANN ZEHR

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	25%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	37%
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	37%
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	46%
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	37%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	38%
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	25%
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	F
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	D
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	B-
Equity	D-

COMMENT: Financially pressed Montana doesn't put much money into early-childhood education. But new rules, which took effect in September 2000, strengthened the state's modest training requirements for child-care providers, as well as the health and safety standards for child-care programs. The state has also used federal aid to set up a program that encourages child-care workers to pursue additional education and improve the quality of their programs. On the K-12 front, the state is struggling with how to finance schools as student enrollments decline.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. ? indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

Nebraska

1,312 Public schools	$2 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (all revenue sources)	16.2% Children in poverty
21,000 Public school teachers	18% Minority students	15.1% Students with disabilities
286,000 Pre-K-12 enrollment		117,000 Children under 5

The commitment to early-childhood efforts includes tax credits, a funding increase, and teacher scholarships.

Nebraska kicked its early-childhood efforts into high gear in 2001, when a number of bills sailed through the first year of a two-year legislative session. With a strong commitment from Gov. Mike Johanns, the state has gotten a boost in its early-childhood-education efforts.

"We've started to get to the realization that [early-childhood education] is essential, and if you don't invest early, you're going to pay later," says Douglas D. Christensen, the state education commissioner.

A new law that has generated excitement among Nebraska's early-childhood educators provides a tax credit to businesses for 30 percent of all costs incurred in providing child care to employees. Companies can receive the credit for up to three years, and an additional two years if their programs become nationally accredited. Businesses can provide child-care services directly or contract with an existing, licensed care facility.

"Right now, it costs more to send your child to day care than to college," says Amy Berg, a policy advocate with Voices for Children-Nebraska, based in Omaha. She and others hope that the tax credit will help alleviate child care's high cost and encourage more businesses to become involved in early child care.

The legislature also approved the Republican governor's proposal for a $3 million increase over two years to expand the state's Early Childhood Projects—a big jump from the previous year's $560,000. The money will be used to expand a pilot project that created 10 programs beginning in 1992. The grants help communities set up collaborative child-care programs that can receive funding for half their operating budgets, up to $50,000 a year.

Nebraska also is on track to begin offering a scholarship and wage-improvement program based on North Carolina's TEACH model, or Teacher Education And Compensation Helps. Some $350,000 has been budgeted for the program, which is expected to award the first round of scholarships in 2002. Under the program, recipients can get help with the cost of college tuition and books and earn raises or bonuses after completing certain coursework.

Limited Efforts

Other bills up for debate during the second half of the legislative session will address the quality of child-care settings, including increasing the training requirements for providers from the current 12 hours a year; establishing a tiered system of licensing, which would help parents gauge the quality of a program; and changing the current system for determining child-to-staff ratios.

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	24%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	31%
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	26%
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	36%
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	?
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	?
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	?
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	F
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	C-
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	B
Equity	D+

COMMENT: Bills to expand early learning sailed through the legislature last year. Businesses can earn a tax credit for 30 percent of all costs incurred in providing child care to employees. Lawmakers increased money for a project that helps communities collaborate to address child-care needs. A teacher-pay package stalled when the governor threatened to veto it because it would increase the state sales tax. Nebraska issued district and school report cards for 2001-02. It won't give its middle and high school writing test this year, further dropping its grade for standards and accountability.

* NOTE: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. ? indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

"At the time that many other states were devoting relatively large amounts of money to early-childhood development, Nebraska was not."

HARRIET EGERTSON
Office of Children and Families, Nebraska Department of Education

"At the time that many other states were devoting relatively large amounts of money to early-childhood development, Nebraska was not," says Harriet Egertson, the head of the state education department's office of children and families.

Known for strong local control in K-12 education, Nebraska takes a similar approach to early-childhood programs. For both the education department and the health and human-services division, the focus has been on providing technical support to local communities as they create their own programs.

Nebraska historically has provided only limited grant funding for community-designed programs through the state education department. A state report released in December 2000 noted that nearly 85 percent of funding for early-childhood programs and activities came from federal sources. With the bulk of the money being targeted for specific services, mostly for general health and for children with disabilities, the remaining funds are used to subsidize child care for low-income families.

As a result of the limited state funding, a majority of programs are provided by private-sector child-care homes and centers. The federal Head Start program serves about 4,500 children through 18 grantees. The state has, however, taken steps to ensure that kindergarten is offered.

In 1987, the legislature enacted a requirement that all public school districts provide kindergarten. But the law stipulated only that schools offer 400 hours of kindergarten a year—the equivalent of half-day classes.

While districts have the option of offering full-day programs, few did so until a 1991 policy changed the formula for state aid. Previously, schools received state aid only for the 400 hours required by law, but now, they receive aid based on the total number of hours provided. In recent years, the number of schools offering full-day kindergarten has steadily risen from seven in 1991 to more than 160 in 2000-01.

A Push for Quality

Nebraska requires anyone providing services to four or more children, excluding family members, to meet minimum health and safety standards. But officials throughout the early-child-care system agree that despite the licensing requirements, quality is still a major concern.

The state standards are "very middle-of-the-road," says Kelly Ptacek, the manager of early-childhood services for Omaha 2000, a project of the Omaha Chamber of Commerce. She notes

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that providers are not even required to have a high school diploma.

The state's strategy for promoting high-quality child care has instead focused on encouraging centers to become nationally accredited through organizations such as the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Child-care centers that become accredited through an approved agency have a higher rate of state reimbursement. Currently, the rate is set at the 90th percentile.

"Kids have to have child care, but it needs to be quality child care before it starts to have the payoff down the road," says Christensen, the state schools chief.

Many in Nebraska see the push for accreditation as a strength of the state's system. According to the state education department, Nebraska jumped from 42nd to 28th in the nation in the percentage of early-childhood programs gaining national accreditation in 1999. The number of accredited programs increased from 15 to 50.

The state's efforts at addressing caregivers' professional development has been much more hands-on.

A cornerstone of the state's early-childhood system is the Early Childhood Training Center, which provides statewide training, support, and resources for all early-childhood professionals to encourage more integration of services.

The training center began its in-service work in 1978, but was not established as a professional-development organization until 1990. Nearly 10,000 early-care professionals received training through the agency in 2000.

Teacher-Pay Measure Defeated

In K-12 developments, plans for a teacher-compensation package were stalled in the legislature when Gov. Johanns threatened to veto the pay hike because it would increase the state sales tax from 5 cents on the dollar to 5¼ cents.

The $49 million pay plan would have given any teacher who had less than four years of teaching experience a $2,000 salary increase for the 2001-02 school year. Districts would have received $100 per pupil the following year to raise salaries.

Nebraska ranks 37th in the nation in teacher salaries when the cost of living is taken into account, according to the American Federation of Teachers.

The average salary of a teacher in Nebraska, adjusted for cost of living, is $37,358—nearly $4,500 below the national average. The legislature declined to pass a proposed $2,500 annual bonus for teachers who earn certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, as well as a $3 million incentive program that would have offered stipends to new teachers in subjects with teacher shortages. A $2.7 million-a-year loan-forgiveness program was the sole survivor of the teacher-pay initiative.

Nebraska lawmakers in November were forced to cut $171 million from the state's two-year budget because of a projected $220 million revenue shortfall brought on by a weakened economy. State aid to schools, at $1.3 billion one of the largest portions of the budget, was spared during the nine-day special legislative session.

But public schools aren't in the clear yet. Gov. Johanns may have to slice a portion of education aid because lawmakers still have to trim $50 million more from the budget in early 2002.

In another effort to improve teacher quality, the state education department unveiled a new Web site called Teach in Nebraska, which provides up-to-date information on job openings for teachers and administrators in Nebraska schools. It allows candidates to search for openings, post résumés, and apply directly for positions online.

Nebraska also issued its first "State of the Schools Report" in fall 2001. The report offers a district-by-district profile in three areas: student achievement; school performance data; and financial resources, allocation, and expenditures. Each district will be compared against the state average for the key indicators.

-LORI MEYER

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Nevada

484 Public schools	$1.9 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures *(all revenue sources)*	13.7% Children in poverty
18,000 Public school teachers	41% Minority students	11% Students with disabilities
341,000 Pre-K-12 enrollment		146,000 Children under 5

State expands access to pre-K programs, and focuses on better training for caregivers and teachers.

After many years of giving early-childhood issues a back seat to other priorities, Nevada is trying to focus more on improving learning for its youngest children, setting aside millions in new money to establish prekindergarten programs and taking steps to ensure that teachers and caretakers are better trained.

With the support of Republican Gov. Kenny Guinn, the state legislature in 2001 approved $3.5 million each for fiscal 2002 and fiscal 2003 for grants to school districts or community groups for comprehensive prekindergarten programs.

State education department officials hope the money will create room to serve 2,000 new preschool students, says Gloria Dopf, the leader of the department's educational equity team. Grantees must demonstrate that they are enhancing the youngsters' development and school readiness.

That new money marked a significant expansion in Nevada's state-financed preschool efforts. Previously, the state's only support of such programs had been to supplement the federal Even Start family-literacy program in Nevada, which received $697,500 in fiscal 2001, with $500,000 in state funding. Together, the state and federal Even Start programs serve about 400 families.

Nevada used to supplement its $19.3 million-a-year Head Start and Early Head Start programs, which together serve about 3,128 children, but ceased those supplements several years ago.

Even the federal money falls far short of what is needed, educators say. Kathy Biagi, the state's Head Start collaboration coordinator, says Nevada serves only 13 percent of eligible children.

Scarce Resources

Early-childhood advocates welcomed the expansion in state-subsidized preschool offerings and credited the leadership of Guinn, who has made early literacy a cornerstone of his tenure.

But appreciative as they are, many advocates still say the state has a long way to go in overcoming a historical reluctance to devote much attention to early-childhood issues.

Scarce resources also have played a part. Without a state income tax, and with mining and gaming revenues declining, the funding pot for major programs has been anything but bottomless.

"Our state never has done well by early childhood," says Democratic Assemblywoman Vivian L. Freeman, who has pressed for program improvements and teacher training. "I've been in the legislature 15 years, and I don't see a lot of emphasis on these kinds of issues."

Democratic Assemblywoman Bonnie Parnell, a former teacher and state PTA president who now co-chairs the Assembly's education committee, salutes her colleagues for approving the new preschool money, but says the state must allot even more to early-childhood programs even as it boosts child-care subsidies and raises standards for preschool teacher training.

Increasing Teacher Training

Some progress is being made on that front. The licensing board that oversees early-childhood teachers doubled from six to 12 the number of hours of ongoing training that teachers and directors in the state's 1,060 licensed preschool and child-care settings must complete each year, says Patricia J. Hedgecoth, the chief of the state's bureau of services for child care. The initial training required to teach in such settings, however, is only six hours, and three of those can be in cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

The state's Childcare Advisory Committee, composed of community members and representatives of various state agencies that deal with early-childhood issues, is discussing ways to introduce a career ladder that could link better teacher training to enhanced compensation, Hedgecoth says.

It has commissioned the University of Nevada-Reno to conduct a comprehensive study of Nevada's child-care workforce, which will enable administrators to identify problems and work to address them.

The state also is trying to boost the quality of its teaching force through a scholarship program, which uses federal Child Care and Development Fund, or CCDF, money to pay for college coursework for prekindergarten teachers.

Last year, 968 people participated in the program. CCDF funds also finance an apprenticeship program that last year paid for coursework for 121 aspiring teachers. The program also places the aspiring teachers in supervised positions in classrooms and provides incentive bonuses to centers that participate.

The state has adopted a special teacher licensure focused on birth through grade 2 in the hope that teachers who intend to work with the youngest children will be better prepared if their training focuses on that age group, rather than on the broader age range usually covered by school licensure, says Skip Wenda, who oversees teacher licensing in Nevada.

The birth-to-grade 2 licensure, created in 2000, is now required for public school teachers

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	16%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	20%
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	19%
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	23%
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	21%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	24%
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	17%
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	B-
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	C-
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	C-
Equity	B

COMMENT: Legislators approved $8 million over two years for prekindergarten. The state is using federal dollars to encourage child-care workers to pursue more training, and it pays higher rates to providers who meet quality criteria. In 2001, lawmakers also allotted $4.4 million a year for both years of the fiscal 2002-2003 biennial budget to raise literacy rates in grades K-3, approved a pay hike for classroom teachers, and set aside money to continue reducing class sizes. Nevada unveiled new tests in grades 3 and 5, provided more money for struggling schools, and is revising a high school exit test.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. ? indicates the state did not participate in the national assessments.

"Our state never has done well by early childhood. I've been in the legislature 15 years, and I don't see a lot of emphasis on these kinds of issues."

VIVIAN L. FREEMAN
Democratic State Assemblywoman

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in grades K-2, but is not yet required for preschool teachers, though that is the state's goal, he says.

To reach poor children, the state runs mobile preschools. The Classroom On Wheels, nicknamed "COW" because of its initials and its black-and-white painted buses, brings preschool services to more than 600 youngsters a year, financed with $300,000 in state funding. Nevada also used a $175,000 federal grant to produce and distribute training videos for child-care workers, hoping to benefit in particular those in rural areas who have difficulty finding training.

Nevada is trying to improve the quality of its subsidized early-childhood programs by implementing a new, tiered reimbursement program this year.

In 2001, the legislature earmarked $1 million for each year of the 2002-2003 biennium from the state's annual $22.2 million in CCDF funds to reward centers that meet certain quality indicators by reimbursing them at a higher rate, says Gerald J. Allen, Nevada's child-care coordinator.

One of the state's key initiatives, approved in 2001, focuses on improving the literacy rates of students in kindergarten through grade 3. Proposed by the governor, the Early Literacy Intervention Program sets aside $4.4 million a year over the two years of the biennial budget to train teachers in reading techniques.

Improving Teacher Pay

In addition to its early-childhood efforts, Nevada focused in 2001 on improving teacher pay in an effort to retain qualified instructors. Lawmakers approved a 3 percent bonus in 2001 and a 2 percent raise for summer 2002, as well as signing bonuses for new teachers. The legislature also set aside $192 million to continue the state's class-size-reduction program for two more years.

The 2000-01 school year marked the first time that Nevada had a complete set of content standards for its schools. In 2001, the state completed grade-by-grade performance standards detailing what students must know and be able to do.

In teacher training, the legislature extended for two more years funding for the state's four regional professional-development centers, and expanded the centers' role beyond training teachers in the state's new standards. The centers also will now serve as the locus of training for the governor's Early Literacy Intervention Program, says Bill Arensdorf, the state education department's team leader for accountability.

Academically struggling schools received some help from the 2001 legislature. Lawmakers raised from $3.3 million to $5.7 million the annual sum earmarked to help schools in need of improvement and expand the pool of schools eligible for help. The change will enable the state education department to help 75 schools, twice the previous number, Arensdorf says.

The state added a new element to the list of topics schools must report on to the state for its annual accountability report. Along with such factors as class size, test scores, and attendance, schools must now provide the dollar figure they spend on teachers' professional development.

Nevada, which gives an annual norm-referenced test to its 4th, 8th, and 10th graders, added a new assessment in the spring of 2001: criterion-referenced tests for 3rd and 5th graders, linked to the state's standards. The state legislature allocated money to develop a criterion-referenced test for 8th grade, which officials expect to administer in 2003.

The high school proficiency exam in reading and mathematics, newly revised to better reflect the state's standards, was to have included a science portion in the fall of 2001. But the state decided to delay its inclusion for two years.

The legislature also tightened accountability for charter schools, requiring that they participate in the state's data-collection system on all students and prohibiting schools from being organized for profit.

–CATHERINE GEWERTZ

New Hampshire

521 Public schools	$1.3 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (all revenue sources)	14.3% Children in poverty
14,000 Public school teachers	4.9% Minority students	13.5% Students with disabilities
210,000 Pre-K-12 enrollment		76,000 Children under 5

The Granite State remains less focused on preschool than on getting kindergartens off the ground.

While other states debate whether to offer preschool to 4-year-olds or extend their kindergartens from a half-day to a full day, New Hampshire policymakers are still arguing over whether to offer kindergarten at all.

School districts in the Granite State are not required to offer kindergarten, and many don't. According to the latest estimates from the Foundation for Child Development, a New York City-based philanthropy, New Hampshire's public kindergartens serve only 53 percent of eligible children—the lowest percentage of any state.

To remedy the problem, the state in 1997 made a promise to school districts: Open new kindergarten classrooms, and the state will pick up 75 percent of the building costs.

Dozens of districts took up the state's offer. But in 2001, the money ran out—with 20 of the state's 168 districts still lacking public kindergarten programs. The problem is that some of those remaining districts are in the more densely populated, south-central region of the state.

"Kindergarten is sort of last on the list for those districts, because they're having so much trouble keeping their noses above water with the ones they have to serve," says Helen D. Schotanus, who oversees the development of kindergarten programs for the New Hampshire Department of Education.

That's why legislators found themselves arguing once again last year over whether to extend the kindergarten-incentive program for two more years.

In the end, they agreed to funnel another $6 million into the program and to adjust the state's funding formula to increase access to full-day kindergarten.

Still, advocates predict the funding will quickly fall short of the need.

The shortage of kindergarten services also has a trickle-down effect on programs for younger children. In preschool programs paid for with federal Head Start dollars, for example, 5-year-olds from low-income families take up slots that could go to needy 4-year-olds.

State officials estimate that the 1,425 youngsters attending Head Start programs in New Hampshire in 2000 represented only a small fraction of the 10,000 who might have been eligible.

Funding Debate Dominates

New Hampshirites' famous independent streak explains some of the resistance to providing universal kindergarten. The bigger problem, however, is that the state's long-running problems with school funding tend to overshadow anything else going on, like a 500-pound gorilla in a roomful of chimpanzees.

Since 1991, when five property-poor towns challenged the school finance system in court, the New Hampshire Supreme Court has twice struck down state education funding schemes. As a stopgap response to the latest ruling, in 1997, lawmakers created a statewide property tax to boost the state's share of education spending.

Because the tax was scheduled to sunset at the end of this biennium—in June 2003—lawmakers felt pressured last year to come up with a more permanent solution.

After rejecting proposals to enact state sales, income, or consumption taxes to pay for schools, legislators voted last year to keep the statewide property tax and make it permanent. Even so, the issue promises to rear its head again this year when the legislature reconvenes.

"The number-one political issue in New Hampshire is funding public schools and, until that issue is resolved, the likelihood of additional funds for children from birth to age 5 is unlikely," says Margaret Leitch Copeland, the administrator for the Child Development Bureau in the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services.

After parents, federal dollars pay for most of the child care provided to New Hampshire children 5 or younger.

The state's $230,000-a-year contribution to the federal Head Start programs operating within its borders has remained level since the mid-1990s. And New Hampshire provides the minimum amount required to keep its matching federal grant through the Child Care and Development Fund.

On the other hand, the state has managed to use funds it earmarks for that federal child-care program in innovative ways. Since 2000, the state has paid for select groups of child-care-center directors and lead teachers to take weeklong seminars in early-childhood education at Boston's Wheelock College. If those participants also agree to add children to their programs, they can get new equipment from the state.

In addition, the state provides scholarships to child-care workers who cannot attend the seminars so that they can pursue similar training at community colleges. In all, the state plans to spend $1 million over the next two years to shore up the education of child-care workers.

Working Conditions Examined

On their own, child-care workers also drew public attention to their field in January 2001 by staging a "virtual strike"—or a public-information campaign—to advertise their poor pay and benefits. The campaign resulted in the creation of two state commissions to study pay and health-insurance issues for child-care workers.

The field also has a friend in Democratic Gov. Jeanne Shaheen. The governor promoted a bill last year to strengthen K-3 literacy instruction in 100 schools with low reading scores.

The $6 million proposal called for training teachers and child-care workers in early-reading instruction, starting classes or home-visitation programs to involve parents in their children's education, and developing courses in early-literacy instruction in the state's higher education system.

The bill made it through the Republican-controlled House, but was tabled for lack of time to consider it.

Advocates and lawmakers, however, say prospects are good for the bill to pass in some form in 2002.

Shaheen had less luck in 2001 with another education issue she has long championed: school accountability.

The governor sought to require districts to draft their own plans for improving schools. The proposal allowed the state to step in, however, when schools failed to meet their own targets.

But in the version of the bill that reached the governor's desk, districts would have been encouraged, rather than required, to write improvement plans.

Legislators had also added a provision, opposed by Shaheen and the state teachers' union, that would have made it easier for local school boards to fire teachers not performing up to snuff. As a result, the governor vetoed the whole accountability package.

–DEBRA VIADERO

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	?
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	?
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	?
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	?
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	38%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	?
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	?
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	C
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	D
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	–
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	C
Equity	F

COMMENT: The state doesn't pay for kindergarten for every 5-year-old. Despite innovative uses of federal aid to improve the education of child-care workers, the state hasn't put much money into the early years. School finance problems continue to dominate debates. In 2001, lawmakers made permanent a statewide property tax to raise the state's share of education aid. The governor failed to win support for a proposal to strengthen educational accountability.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1996-98 data, the most recent available. ? indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

New Jersey

2,383 Public schools	$14.1 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (all revenue sources)	12% Children in poverty
98,000 Public school teachers	39.2% Minority students	6.4% Students with disabilities
1.3 million Pre-K-12 enrollment		564,000 Children under 5

Ambitious state preschool programs expand, but local officials are frustrated over coordination.

New Jersey continues to feel growing pains as it expands one of the nation's most ambitious preschool programs.

Last fall, New Jersey enrolled a record number of 3- and 4-year olds in state-financed preschool classes. The preschoolers also were more likely than in the past to have certified teachers. More kindergarten students than ever were also expected to be in all-day classes as part of the state's multipronged effort to ratchet up school readiness.

"The stars are aligned," says Margretta Fairweather, the state's assistant commissioner for early-childhood education. "The ideas behind the program, the resources, and the commitment are all there to make this a beacon in the world."

But enthusiasm over the preschool expansion is tempered by local frustration over teacher shortages, a lack of space for new children, and a need for more policy guidance from the state.

The picture is further complicated because multiple agencies have a hand in running two separate preschool programs. One was court-ordered in 30 mostly urban districts. The other, which is not court-ordered and has a lower profile, covers some 100 smaller, low-income districts.

"You have four state entities involved, but with no one leading the troops forward," says Cynthia Rice, the senior policy analyst for the Association for Children of New Jersey, based in Newark. "Each is doing what they think should be done, and the coordination is not what it should be."

Evaluating *Abbott*'s Wide Reach

The more prominent of the two programs was mandated by the New Jersey Supreme Court in 1998 as part of the *Abbott* v. *Burke* school finance lawsuit.

Noting that academic disadvantages begin early for children in the 30 *Abbott* districts, the court ordered the state to provide preschool for 3- and 4-year-olds in those sites by the fall of 1999.

In demanding a "high quality" program, the court called for preschools with certified teachers, curriculum standards, adequate facilities, and class sizes with no more than 15 students.

Districts can run the programs themselves, or contract with local child-care centers or Head Start programs—as long as their classes meet the standards for the 30 special-needs districts.

Since the fall of 1999, enrollment has climbed from 17,331 children to an estimated 29,000 this year.

"This is an unbelievable opportunity," Fairweather says. "The state is serious about meeting the needs of the *Abbott* districts."

But critics say the state is not living up to its leadership and fiscal obligations.

In September 2001, lawyers with the Education Law Center, which represents the *Abbott* plaintiffs, were back before the state supreme court, arguing that the state had not done enough to increase preschool enrollment.

Enrollment may be up from a year ago, but programs still have not reached all of the approximately 54,000 eligible students, says David G. Sciarra, the executive director of the Newark-based center. State officials point out that the program is voluntary and that some parents enroll their children in nonpublic programs.

In October, the court issued a preliminary decision and sided with the plaintiffs, ordering the state to do more to increase preschool access. Managing the court's complex and expensive mandates will fall to New Jersey Gov. James E. McGreevey, a Democrat, who was sworn in this month.

Local school officials add that participation would grow if they could guarantee more spots.

"What's the sense of marketing a full-day program when we can only serve half-day for some kids?" says Pablo Clausell, the superintendent of the 8,200-student Perth Amboy district.

Some 1,700 children qualify for preschool there, but the district has space to serve just 345 children itself, and will contract with local centers for another 400 youngsters this year.

Meanwhile, research on the *Abbott* preschools is mixed. A state-sponsored study of 246 classrooms in 130 programs rated 27 percent of the classrooms as "excellent" and 19 percent "inadequate"; 54 percent fell in between.

The report by the Rockville, Md.-based Westat research company found shortcomings in book selection, playground equipment, and the limited use of portfolios to monitor student progress.

However, it praised classrooms for their positive staff-child interactions and good condition. Overall, the report found that the classrooms rated highest in quality also had teachers with stronger qualifications.

"I think the biggest hindrance to quality is getting enough qualified teachers," says Gary Resnick, the project director for the Westat study. "All agree that the [teacher] requirements are appropriate. The question is, how do we get there?"

A separate, more critical review concluded that state funding for preschool has been so inadequate that local school districts and child-care centers have been unable to provide either the targeted quality of classes or sufficient spots for students.

The report, which covered only the first year of the *Abbott* programs, found just 15 percent of the classrooms were "good," while only 2 percent rated high enough to produce the gains required to help poor children compete with their wealthier peers.

"The state is so penny-wise and pound-foolish

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	?
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	?
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	?
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	?
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	?
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	?
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	?
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	C
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	C+
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	A
Equity	D

COMMENT: In 1998, a court ordered the creation of high-quality preschools in 30 mostly urban districts. The state also pays for preschools in about 100 other districts with a high proportion of poor children. Last year, lawmakers approved incentives to attract first-year preschool teachers. But budget woes forced reductions in a mentoring program for new public school educators. The state will introduce new high school tests this year; the class of 2003 must pass them to graduate. New Jersey now provides incentives for teachers to earn national certification.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. ? indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

"The stars are aligned. The ideas behind the program, the resources, and the commitment are all there to make this a beacon in the world."

MARGRETTA FAIRWEATHER
New Jersey Assistant Commissioner for Early Childhood Education

that I've begun thinking politicians can't see one year beyond the next election," says W. Steven Barnett, the director of the Center for Early Education Research at Rutgers University, which put out the report.

The *Abbott* preschool program joins another state effort to aid New Jersey's youngest students.

For the past five years, the Garden State has provided preschool funds to about 100 non-*Abbott* school systems with student-poverty rates of at least 20 percent. This is the first school year, however, that those districts have been required to offer half-day preschool for 4-year-olds along with all-day kindergarten.

Fairweather says districts used the money—about $90 million in fiscal 2001—to hire staff, renovate facilities, and take other steps to prepare. "These requirements have been coming along," she adds. "This is their due date."

With so much attention on the *Abbott* districts, however, observers wondered how successful the fall 2001 phase-in would be.

Because the *Abbott* and non-*Abbott* programs follow different rules, local administrators were confused about expectations, some say. For example, guidelines vary on contracting with day-care centers for preschool.

"The long and short of it is that the standards and expectations are still very vague."

CYNTHIA RICE
Senior Policy Analyst, Association for Children of New Jersey

In addition, state funding for non-*Abbott* preschool programs has not been earmarked for specific uses, so it is hard to say exactly how it has been spent and to what extent it has been used to prepare for the new preschool requirements.

"The long and short of it is that the standards and expectations are still very vague. That's been a problem for superintendents who have to implement this," says Rice of the Association for Children of New Jersey. "Part of the problem is that *Abbott* has been all-consuming. [State] staff cannot handle both programs."

Budget Winners and Losers

The preschool efforts were drawn into the 2001-02 budget-writing process.

To address a teacher shortage, acting Gov. Donald T. DiFrancesco won approval of a plan for $5 million for signing bonuses, laptop computers, and loan forgiveness for qualifying first-year preschool teachers.

DiFrancesco, a Republican, initiated another $3 million program, which won legislative approval, that awards grants to college and university programs with good track records of preparing preschool teachers.

Overall, the state's $22.9 billion fiscal 2002 budget included $7.4 billion in education spending—a $604 million increase over the previous year.

Special education was one of the biggest budget winners and received $136 million more than it had in fiscal 2001, or a total of $896 million. In addition, $15 million was set aside for "extraordinary special education aid" in districts with special demands.

A projected budget shortfall, however, forced the governor to accept a $6 million cut to a statewide teacher-mentoring program, which ultimately got $8 million.

Finally, the legislature approved $13 million in new spending to raise the child-care subsidy to some 8,000 children living with relatives to $250 per month. The maximum monthly subsidy had been $162.

"We believe in the value of kinship care," DiFrancesco said in a statement last spring. "And we're putting dollars and cents behind those beliefs."

–ROBERT C. JOHNSTON

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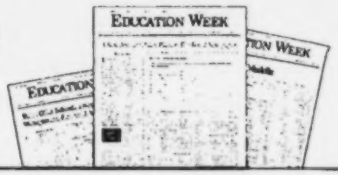

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New Mexico

733 Public schools	$2 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (all revenue sources)	26% Children in poverty
20,000 Public school teachers	63.8% Minority students	10.7% Students with disabilities
317,000 Pre-K-12 enrollment		131,000 Children under 5

State lawmakers concentrate on consistent, high-quality care and better pay for child-care workers.

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	12%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	13%
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	18%
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	20%
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	22%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	24%
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	18%
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	B
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	C-
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	C
Equity	B+

COMMENT: New Mexico has created a career pathway for preschool teachers. And it's experimenting with tying subsidy rates for providers to the quality of their programs. The legislature approved $13 million in 2001 to expand full-day kindergarten. The state's testing system is in transition, lowering its grade for standards and accountability this year. The state is not giving the New Mexico Achievement Assessment in 2001-02; that lowered its grade for standards and accountability to a B this year. Students in grades 3-9 will still take a norm-referenced exam. The state hopes to have new tests aligned with its standards in place by 2002-03.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1999-00 data, the most recent available. ? indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

"We need better wages to reduce the turnover. Many are making less than the minimum wage."

TERRY ANDERSON
Immediate Past President
New Mexico Association
for the Education
of Young Children

Striving to improve early-childhood education, New Mexico has taken significant steps toward ensuring a better-trained, better-paid corps of teachers and child-care workers and has committed a sizable chunk of its money to making sure more of its youngest children can read.

One pivotal advance has been the development of a career ladder for early-childhood educators. Teachers in licensed child-care or preschool settings eventually will be required to reach the first rung of the ladder—completion of a 45-hour training course. Directors of such centers will be required to reach the second rung—completion of a Child Development Associate credential.

The structure has four additional levels: a one-year vocational certificate, and associate of arts, bachelor's, and master's degrees. Leaders of the effort to improve early-childhood education and child-care quality are now focusing on how pay scales can be linked to the various levels of the career ladder.

During their 2001 legislative session, lawmakers asked for a study on how the state could finance higher salaries for early-childhood educators. Legislators are expected to consider that report in their 2002 session.

In a field already notorious for low pay, child-care workers in New Mexico fare worse than most. According to the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average annual income for the state's child-care workers was $13,730 in 1999, about $1,700 less than the national average. Only 13 states posted lower average annual child-care wages.

"We need better wages to reduce the turnover," says Terry Anderson, the immediate past president of the New Mexico Association for the Education of Young Children and the director of an infant-to-preschool program in Silver City. "Many are making less than the minimum wage."

Targeting Quality, Protecting Programs

Another important step in the state's effort to improve the quality of early-childhood teachers has been the statewide alignment of early-childhood training programs. Eight years in the making, the "articulation" of coursework ensures that all training focuses on the same subject areas and is readily transferable from high school vocational programs to community colleges to four-year state universities.

"This should make care much more consistent for children and families, since providers will be trained in the same set areas of competency," says Judith A. Paiz, the director of the New Mexico Office of Child Development. "It should make it easier for teachers to be trained."

Along with improving teacher quality in its approximately 950 licensed preschools and child-care centers, the state is trying to improve program quality.

Its Aim High pilot program, financed with about $1 million of the state's $36.7 million annual federal Child Care and Development Fund money, is experimenting with linking subsidy-reimbursement rates to quality.

The program's 164 participants agree to work with a child-development specialist, who advises them on how to improve services. The specialist also evaluates and rates them—a critical decision that then affects the level of reimbursement participants receive.

Additionally, the legislature in 2001 approved a measure that enables child-care centers to receive the highest rate of reimbursement if they secure national accreditation.

The state is working to ensure survival of its federally subsidized child-care programs by increasing the rates at which they are reimbursed. After several years without increases, the state boosted the reimbursement rates for 2000, 2001, and this year.

The biggest increases, which have been paid for with CCDF or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families money, have gone to infant-care programs because that is where the greatest need lies, says Miquela Rivera, the deputy director of early care for the New Mexico Department of Children, Youth, and Families' prevention and intervention division.

But Rivera says it is impossible to determine if that money was used to make more slots available or for other needs, such as improving teacher compensation—to reduce turnover—or training. There is no accountability system requiring feedback on how the money is used, she adds.

State lawmakers have tried to expand access to early-learning programs for the state's neediest children by increasing from $5 million to $6 million the amount they set aside to supplement the state's federally financed Head Start and Early Head Start programs. Head Start, by far the larger of the two programs, received $38.4 million in federal funding in fiscal 2000 and served more than 7,100 children.

Still, the demand far exceeds the supply of such programs.

Debi Kruse, the state's Head Start collaboration coordinator, says she receives $8 million in grant applications for the $6 million in available supplements. "There are so many working parents that the programs want to expand from half-day to full-day and from part-year to

full-year," she says.

The legislature last year approved another measure that could expand access to early learning. The state, for each of the past several years, has received about $1 million annually in federal funds for its 10 Even Start programs, which work with 3- and 4-year-olds and their families at 21 sites to enhance family literacy skills. Using $2 million newly appropriated by the legislature, the state education department hopes to open another 10 programs modeled after Even Start.

The state's drive toward improving child literacy got a big boost in 2001, when the legislature approved $21.6 million to expand and accelerate its full-day-kindergarten initiative—$8.5 million in recurring funds and $13.1 million in new money. State education leaders anticipated offering full-day classes to half of all kindergarten students for the 2001-02 school year and to all eligible children by the 2003-04 school year. Districts that choose to expand and need more space can draw on $5 million that lawmakers set aside for improving full-day programs' facilities.

A requirement of the full-day-kindergarten program is that children take literacy assessments in the fall and spring. Republican Gov. Gary E. Johnson pushed for an accountability provision that specifies that the state may revoke funding for full-day-kindergarten programs that are not making sufficient literacy progress with their students.

Standards and Testing

New Mexico, in its push toward early literacy, also has continued the cyclical revision of its content and performance standards. Its language arts standards now include grade-by-grade specifics of what children must know and be able to do as early as kindergarten. Examples include mastery of colors, the alphabet, and letter sounds.

State officials hope that, taken together, programs such as all-day kindergarten and Even Start will form a "continuum of early literacy" that serve as crucial steps toward success in later grades.

"This is not an issue that will just come and go," says Toni Nolan-Trujillo, the assistant superintendent for learning services at the state education department. "Unless we are committed for the long haul, we can't make a difference."

In areas of school reform beyond early childhood, New Mexico revised its social studies standards last year, making them more specific and adding grade-by-grade performance standards.

It also revised the accountability matrix by which schools are rated, adding parent-involvement and school safety categories and making sure that schools that saw significant improvements in test scores were not at a disadvantage compared with schools whose scores were already high.

The governor also signed a measure that requires diagnostic testing of students in grades 1-9 in reading each spring. Those who are not reading on grade level will be required to participate in "reading enhancement" the following year. The effort is scheduled to go into effect in spring 2002.

The state, meanwhile, is continuing to work on development of a criterion-referenced literacy test to be administered to students in grades K-3, which it hopes to administer this spring as well, and the creation of a more stringent high school exit exam.

New Mexico had been using a blend of norm-referenced and criterion-referenced tests in grades 3-9, but state officials dropped the criterion-referenced portion for the 2001-02 academic year, concluding that it did not align with state standards. Officials hope to introduce a new criterion-referenced test for those grades in 2002-03.

Starting in spring 2001, 8th graders were required to demonstrate competency before promotion to 9th grade. Decisions were made by teachers, based on students' overall performance on tests and in the classroom. Officials say it is too soon to know the numbers of students held back.

–CATHERINE GEWERTZ

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New York

4,273 Public schools	$29.2 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (all revenue sources)	24.2% Children in poverty
216,000 Public school teachers	44.7% Minority students	14.5% Students with disabilities
2.9 million Pre-K-12 enrollment		1.2 million Children under 5

A plan for state-financed preschools is behind schedule, in part because of economic worries.

"We're beginning to make things more coherent. We're beginning to think this is a system."

ANNE MITCHELL
Consultant on Early Childhood Education

REPORT CARD

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	22%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	26%
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	26%
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	30%
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	29%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	34%
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	21%
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	A
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	C
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	A
Equity	D+

COMMENT: New York is one of three states that are phasing in prekindergarten for 4-year-olds whose parents want it, regardless of parental income, but budget battles delayed a planned expansion of the program. Starting this year, all prekindergarten teachers in a state-financed program are required to be licensed in elementary education. The state also has some of the most stringent regulations for the staffing of child-care centers, and it tightened them as of May 2001. New York is one of five states with "clear and specific" standards in all subjects at all grade levels.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. † indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

This was to be the school year in which New York's Universal Prekindergarten Program reached every willing school district.

Instead, expansion of the program fell victim to a budget battle pitting the legislature against Gov. George E. Pataki, a Republican. Then, when the legislature reconvened in the fall, hopes for additional school aid that might salvage some preschool programs were dashed by the fiscal impact of the attack on New York City's World Trade Center. As a result, only a few new districts were added this school year to the roster of those offering the state-financed, half-day classes. Nor was money provided to increase the number of 4-year-olds in existing classes.

Still, the prekindergarten program shows how bridging the traditionally separate worlds of child care, on the one hand, and public schools, on the other, can improve both the availability and the quality of early-childhood education. The program now enrolls about a quarter of the state's 4-year-olds, with 60 percent of the youngsters served in child-care or Head Start locations rather than in public schools.

The program's many champions see the prekindergarten initiative as the outgrowth of a new and powerful way of thinking about early childhood that melds care and education, the needs of children and those of parents.

"We're beginning to make things more coherent," says Anne Mitchell, a consultant on early-childhood education in Climax, N.Y., who has worked frequently in her home state. "We're beginning to think this is a system."

A Long History of Helping

That system has roots stretching back to at least 1968, when New York state established its Experimental Prekindergarten Program just three years after the federal government founded Head Start. Both programs aimed to help children from poor families catch up to their more advantaged peers and prepare them for school. Both programs flourish in the state today.

The Empire State also has a history of aiding families with the cost of private child care. Like many other states caught up in overhauling the welfare system, New York over the past decade increased the money it allocated for subsidizing child care for low-income families.

But unlike many states, New York had already been providing its own subsidies with little federal help. As of 1999, the latest year for which data are available, 19 percent of the state's families eligible for subsidies were receiving them, according to federal figures. That's about 7 percentage points higher than the national average.

In addition, the state helps families pay for child care with tax deductions for the care of dependent children. New York is one of only 10 states with such programs to include refunds for poor families that pay no income tax.

New York set aside, in all, nearly $1 billion in state and federal money for early care and education in its 2002 fiscal year, including $275 million in state aid for prekindergarten.

The prekindergarten program put in place by the governor and the legislature in 1997 has attracted considerable national attention. Though it bears the name "universal," it does not go as far as Georgia's, which offers full-day sessions to all children whose parents desire the program. New York's program leaves it up to school districts to choose whether they will establish prekindergartens open to all children.

Assemblyman Sheldon Silver, the speaker of New York's lower house, who pushed for the 1997 legislation that set up the prekindergarten program, links it to the statewide academic standards New York adopted in 1996 and the more demanding tests that they have spawned. In addition to "universal" prekindergarten, the legislative package called for reduced K-3 class sizes and more full-day kindergartens.

"It's clear that New York children are not performing well on standardized tests," Silver, a Democrat, says. "And some of the ways experts suggest to better impact children [include] starting the educational process earlier and reducing class size in order to allow them more individual attention."

Phase-In of Pre-K Program Slows

This school year, the prekindergarten programs are expected to serve more than 52,000 children, at a cost of about $275 million. The 1997 plan had called for $500 million to be spent on universal prekindergarten this year, a sum designed to pay for a program in any district that wanted one. Instead, the approximately 260 districts in the last group to be phased in will continue to wait, and the 2002 allocation remains the same as that for 2001.

While some district leaders have had to postpone their hopes of starting a program, others have turned down the state's money, citing a lack of space for the programs and uncertainty over whether funding will continue.

By all accounts, though, the program has succeeded in fostering collaboration between public schools and other providers of early care and education. The law requires districts that want prekindergarten support to convene broadly representative prekindergarten advisory boards and contract out at least 10 percent of their funding for

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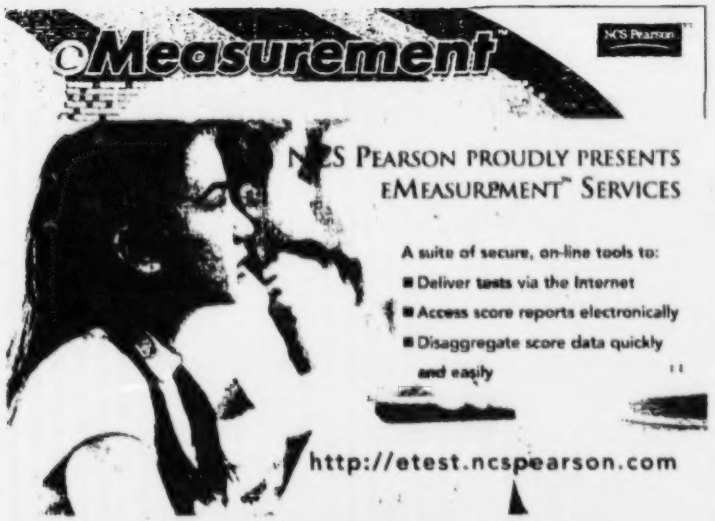

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the program—a percentage that has been far exceeded. Leaders say the collaboration has yielded increased access to early education and better quality. "That's the piece that has really moved us forward in terms of ways to serve families, number of kids, and quality," says Cynthia E. Gallagher, the coordinator of early-childhood education for the state department of education.

Starting this year, all prekindergarten teachers in a state-supported program are required to be certified in elementary education. In the past, teachers other than those in public schools could meet lesser requirements.

To guide the curriculum in language arts, mathematics, and social studies in the earliest grades, the state provides performance indicators for prekindergarten through 1st grade and requires districts to report on progress in those grades.

New York does not require districts to offer kindergarten, but with the 1997 legislation, it has moved closer to full-day programs for most children. Of the state's 704 districts, more than 500 now offer full-day programs, up from 467 in 1997.

On the child-care front, the state has some of the nation's more stringent regulations for the staffing of child-care centers, and tightened them as of May 2001. For instance, New York is the only state to require one staff member for every eight 4-year-olds. Other states set the ratio anywhere from 10-to-1 to 20-to-1.

The state helps child-care staff members pay for professional-development conferences and recently began to pay tuition costs for a very few workers aiming for a more advanced credential. Last year, it also initiated annual bonuses of between $300 and $700 for those who stay on the job in child-care centers.

"Ways experts suggest to better impact children [include] starting the educational process earlier."

SHELDON SILVER
Speaker of the New York Assembly

Funding Falls Short

The budget battle that hung up funding for universal prekindergarten dealt a general blow to state aid for running schools, many believe. While $200 million in school aid money was added in late October to the bare-bones budget approved in August, the total education budget still came out hundreds of millions less than legislative leaders had originally proposed. Many districts were left in a bind, and responded with property-tax hikes, program cuts, layoffs, and borrowing.

But in the long haul of how New York pays for schools, last year may be even more notable for calls from powerful corners to revamp a notoriously complicated and political finance system. Gov. Pataki proposed a thorough streamlining, and a New York City lower-court judge ordered an overhaul that in effect would make the state give more money to poor districts with low-achieving students. An appeal of that ruling by the state is pending.

Measures to strengthen accountability and promote higher achievement moved from plan to implementation. For the first time, report cards for individual elementary and middle schools showed last year whether the schools had met state standards on 4th and 8th grade tests in mathematics and reading. Schools that did not were given targets for improvement. In high schools, the new state regents' examinations continued to be phased in. Students will be required to pass five exams in order to graduate beginning with the class of 2003. A move to lower some of the passing grades that will be needed in the future was turned aside. -BESS KELLER

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North Carolina

2,148 Public schools	$7.6 billion Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (all revenue sources)	21.3% Children in poverty
80,000 Public school teachers		13.9% Students with disabilities
1.3 million Pre-K-12 enrollment	38.2% Minority students	540,000 Children under 5

Pioneering early-learning efforts have earned national praise, but leaders are coping with tight finances.

North Carolina's efforts to coordinate early-childhood initiatives, improve the quality of the child-care workforce, and increase access to high-quality programs for disadvantaged children continue to earn praise from educators and children's advocates throughout the state and the country.

Smart Start, an 8-year-old public-private partnership that provides money and support to agencies serving children in all the state's 100 counties, has become a model for similar programs in other states, particularly in the South.

But a fiscal crisis that led to a contentious battle over the state's 2002-2003 biennial budget in the longest legislative session in state history yielded a mixed bag for education, particularly for early-childhood programs.

Economic Worries

The Tar Heel State chose to expand its programs for young children with prekindergarten for 4-year-olds at risk of academic failure, reduce class sizes in the earliest grades, and implement a tiered licensing system for early-childhood-care providers.

But money for Smart Start, which provides at least partial funding for local child-care initiatives statewide, was reduced to $210 million, down nearly $60 million from the previous fiscal year.

As the state's fiscal situation continued to worsen, professionals in the field became increasingly worried about the future of the state's attempts to improve child care and public education.

"The sad truth is that even in good economic times, we don't necessarily get these expansion items for kids," says Paula A. Wolf, the chief lobbyist for the Covenant with North Carolina's Children, an advocacy organization based in Raleigh. "So when we have a budget shortfall, [legislators] have the perfect excuse" to stall funding, she contends.

Record of Success

Smart Start has proved effective in improving the quality of child care throughout the state, according to periodic evaluations and multiyear studies by the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Reports by the center show the program has improved collaboration among the various child-care, health, and education agencies within each county since it was launched in 1993.

Center- and home-based child-care programs involved in Smart Start initiatives also have tended to be of higher quality than those that are not. And evidence shows that children who have attended child-care centers participating in Smart Start activities are more prepared for kindergarten than children who haven't.

At least 70 percent of Smart Start money must be used for child care, and at least 30 percent of that money goes toward subsidies for low-income parents. The rest of the Smart Start funds can be used for other purposes, such as health care and family-support services.

Smart Start funding, which is enhanced by local contributions, has been used primarily to reduce staff turnover and raise the quality of child-care workers.

Child-care workers in the state average less than $14,500 a year in pay, and preschool teachers earn an average $17,670, compared with the more than $32,000 earned by kindergarten teachers, according to the latest information from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

But North Carolina has been in the forefront of improving compensation for its workforce in the early-childhood field.

Through programs that offer scholarships, salary incentives, and health care for early-childhood workers who continue their education and remain in their jobs, the state has improved the quality and stability of the workforce. The programs are being duplicated in at least 17 other states.

The initiatives—TEACH (which stands for Teacher Education And Compensation Helps), WAGE$, and the TEACH Early Childhood Health Insurance Program—have helped child-care programs climb the state's new five-star licensing system.

The system rewards center- and home-based programs that put money into the education and training of their staff members. "We have a system in place that supports better quality," says Peggy Ball, the director of the North Caroline Department of Child Development. "You can mandate higher standards, but unless you have a system for helping people achieve those higher standards, it is not likely to happen."

Most of the 9,100 center- and home-based child-care programs registered with the state, however, have not yet advanced beyond the minimal licensing level, according to Ball. As of August 2001, some 2,100 centers and 992 homes had advanced beyond level one, but few had earned the highest two ratings.

And while the licensing system has raised the quality of those programs that have sought higher ratings, the improvements tend to push up fees at

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STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	28%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	30%
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	24%
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	27%
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	28%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	31%
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	27%
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	B
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	B+
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	C
Equity	C

COMMENT: The state's efforts to improve its child-care workforce, coordinate services at the local level, and increase access to high-quality programs have made it a national model. But a worsening fiscal picture yielded mixed news in 2001. The state added prekindergarten for at-risk 4-year-olds, reduced class sizes in the earliest grades, and continued to implement a tiered licensing system for child-care providers. But funding for Smart Start, a public-private partnership to expand early-childhood services, was reduced by nearly $60 million. Despite testing glitches, the state pushed ahead with accountability measures for schools and students.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. ? indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

"The sad truth is that even in good economic times, we don't necessarily get these expansion items for kids."

PAULA A. WOLF
Chief Lobbyist
Covenant
With North Carolina's
Children

many centers and lead to extensive waiting lists for child-care assistance.

Social-Promotion Glitch

Despite a fiscal crisis that led to cuts in several state agencies, Gov. Michael F. Easley won a major victory in the budget debate when lawmakers agreed to raise education funding and provide money for reducing kindergarten class sizes and to begin a preschool program for 4-year-olds considered at risk of future failure in school.

The legislature approved tax increases to help pay for the new programs, which Easley, a Democrat, campaigned for in 2000.

The $14.4 billion fiscal 2002 budget includes $5.9 billion for precollegiate education, a 1.5 percent increase over the previous year.

The state will likely have to expand the preschool program, which will receive more than $12 million over two years, to comply with the recent ruling in a 7-year-old school finance case.

Judge Harold E. Manning Jr. handed down a three-part ruling last year that will require the state to provide a sound, basic education to students at risk of failing. The judge said that school districts didn't necessarily need additional state money to do so, and that they might instead take money from programs for average and gifted students, or trim administrative costs. The judge's final decision was pending at press time as he determines whether state funding is adequate.

The state's accountability program, which has gained a national reputation as an effective tool in raising academic standards and improving low-performing schools, saw continued progress in student performance on tests in 2001.

The accountability program awards bonuses—to the tune of more than $75 million last school year—to teachers and staff members in schools where students' test scores meet or exceed improvement goals set by the state.

According to the "Report on the ABCs of Public Education," more than half the state's 2,158 public schools met or surpassed expectations last school year. Nearly 72 percent of North Carolina's 3rd through 8th graders were "proficient" in both mathematics and reading, up from nearly 62 percent in 1996-97, the first year of the accountability program.

But just 520 schools reached the standard for achieving "exemplary" growth last year—meaning their test scores outpaced expectations by at least 10 percent. That was a 91 percent decline from the previous year.

The accountability plan hit a hurdle last school year when officials discovered that the passing scores for the retooled math exam were set too low. Because of the glitch, thousands of students who might have been deemed unprepared to advance to the 6th grade under the first phase of the state's policy to eliminate social promotion squeaked by.

According to state figures, 2,209 students are repeating 5th grade this school year after failing to meet state requirements—a small fraction of the number state officials had expected to retain, but some 800 more students than the year before the policy was implemented.

More than 6,000 students, however, were promoted after the 2000-01 school year despite falling short of the state's new requirements.

The students moved to 6th grade because of decisions by local officials or through a state waiver that recognized their academic progress. The promotion of students in grades 3 and 8 this year will also be determined by test results.

The problem with the math test drew fire from critics of the testing system and caused the state school board to order an audit of the testing program.

The state board also voted to scrap three assessments to save some $1.2 million and address concerns that students were spending too much classroom time taking tests. -KATHLEEN KENNEDY MANZO

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North Dakota

550 Public schools	$809 million Annual pre-K-12 expenditures (*all revenue sources*)	20.6% Children in poverty
7,700 Public school teachers	10.6% Minority students	11.9% Students with disabilities
104,000 Pre-K-12 enrollment		39,000 Children under 5

Early-childhood issues rank low on the state's priority list, but advocates see some positive signs.

Advocates in North Dakota are pushing for a stronger state role in improving access and quality in early-childhood programs, but they have seen few results from their work.

Reluctance to involve the government in child care, a struggling economy, and a culture fiercely devoted to local control have combined to put proposals aimed at services for the state's youngest children low on North Dakota's priority list. Indeed, early-childhood education has barely made a blip on the radar screens of most legislators.

"The state government puts no money into child care or early care and education, except our required match for federal aid," says Barbara Arnold-Tengesdal, the public-policy director for the North Dakota Association for the Education of Young Children. "It's the state of the public will. There's an attitude that child care is still a family's problem, not a societal issue."

Few Child-Care Centers

Much of the child care throughout the state is available through family providers. More than 2,000 home-based programs are licensed or certified by the state, but about one-fourth are unregulated.

Countless others operate without state approval, Arnold-Tengesdal says. Meanwhile, the state counts just 110 child-care centers, primarily in the cities of Bismarck, Fargo, and Grand Forks.

With just over 640,000 residents, and with one-third of the population carrying the tax burden for the state, North Dakota lacks sufficient resources to pay for education programs, many observers say.

Because of that, the state has not addressed the qualifications of early-childhood workers and programs. The state's licensing system imposes few standards on centers and home child-care providers. And efforts to enact special tax credits for businesses that subsidize child care for their employees fizzled in the 2001 legislative session.

Even a proposal to lower the age at which children are required to attend school from 7 to 6 failed. The bill was pushed by school principals who suggested that attendance at kindergarten would improve if the law required children to be in school.

"There is a large element among North Dakota residents that is always very concerned about parental control, and people are very leery of efforts to legislate anything in early childhood," says Sen. Dwight C. Cook, a Republican who serves as the vice chairman of the Senate education committee. "They don't want to expand early-childhood [laws] to the point where parents' controls are reduced."

Despite little interest in the issue in the legislature, those in the field note a growing partnership among state and local agencies and organizations. The grassroots initiatives, they say, could lead the way to a stronger web of programs and services for children from birth to age 5.

"It is part of our culture to collaborate," says Linda Rorman, the state's Head Start administrator. "Nobody has enough money or resources or manpower to do everything themselves."

Summit on Early-Childhood Education

Early-childhood educators in North Dakota gathered for a "summit" in late 2000 to outline a five-year vision for expanding and upgrading programs. The plan calls for improving professional-development opportunities for child-care workers, addressing the problem of low compensation, and enhancing the substance of the child-care programs throughout the state.

What's more, the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction has set an ambitious goal for improving the quality of its Head Start teachers, calling for all teachers in the federally financed program to have bachelor's degrees by 2003, exceeding the federal requirements. But the legislature has chosen not to continue a $500,000 initiative that provided mini-grants in the 1999-2001 biennial budget to bolster Head Start.

Still, the state's department of health and human services is trying to expand services to young children who may be at risk of failing when they get to school.

The state's early-childhood tracking system, which was intended to identify children with potential developmental and educational problems beginning at birth and to provide diagnostic and support services, was replaced last year.

As it is, parents can still opt to sign up their infants and toddlers for tracking of the children's skills, but the system now consists of home visits from developmental experts who will evaluate the youngsters' progress and recommend programs to prepare them for school. The home visits, state officials hope, will mean closer screening of children's progress and quicker access to support services.

Raising Teacher Salaries

Public education—teachers, in particular—did chalk up one victory in 2001 in the legislature, which awarded $35 million in raises for the 2002-2003 biennium. The money translates into a $1,000 increase in salary for each teacher during the current school year and another $2,000 next school year.

For years, educators in the state have urged lawmakers to address the problem of low teacher pay, which has kept North Dakota in the bottom tier of states for average teacher pay. The average teacher salary in North Dakota was $29,863 during the 1999-2000 school year, according to data from the American Federation of Teachers. The national average was $41,820.

The legislature also set minimum teachers' salaries for the first time, forcing the state's 219 districts to pay annual salaries of at least $18,500 this year, and $20,000 next year. The national average salary for beginning teachers is $27,989, according to the AFT. In many of the state's tiny school districts, teachers earn well below $18,500, sometimes as low as $16,000, according to the North Dakota Education Association.

"We had a long way to go toward improving salaries," says Max Laird, a former president of the NDEA. "This is a very positive step for a very historically conservative state."

Meanwhile, school districts in the state will gain an additional $14 million in revenues over the biennium, thanks to the state's decision to put nearly half its proceeds from the settlement of a multistate lawsuit against the nation's tobacco companies into the common schools trust fund. Districts will get $300 per student—an increase of $80—annually out of the $67.2 million fund.

—KATHLEEN KENNEDY MANZO

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STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (NAEP)	
4th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	25%
8th graders proficient or above in math (2000)	31%
4th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	36%
8th graders proficient or above in science (2000)	40%
4th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	30%
8th graders proficient or above in reading (1998)	?
8th graders proficient in writing (1998)	?
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	D
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY	F
SCHOOL CLIMATE*	—
RESOURCES*	
Adequacy	B
Equity	F

COMMENT: Much of the child care in this conservative state is provided by family-care providers, with little state support. But an active grassroots partnership is working to improve the preparation and pay of child-care workers. The state education department has called for all Head Start teachers to have bachelor's degrees by 2003, exceeding federal requirements. In 2001, lawmakers approved $35 million in raises for public school teachers for the 2002-2003 biennium. The state also augmented its tests to reflect state standards.

* NOTES: School climate was not graded this year. Some state grades for resource adequacy changed this year because of changes in methodology. For details, see "State of the States." State grades for resource equity are based on 1998-99 data, the most recent available. ? indicates the state did not participate in the national assessment.

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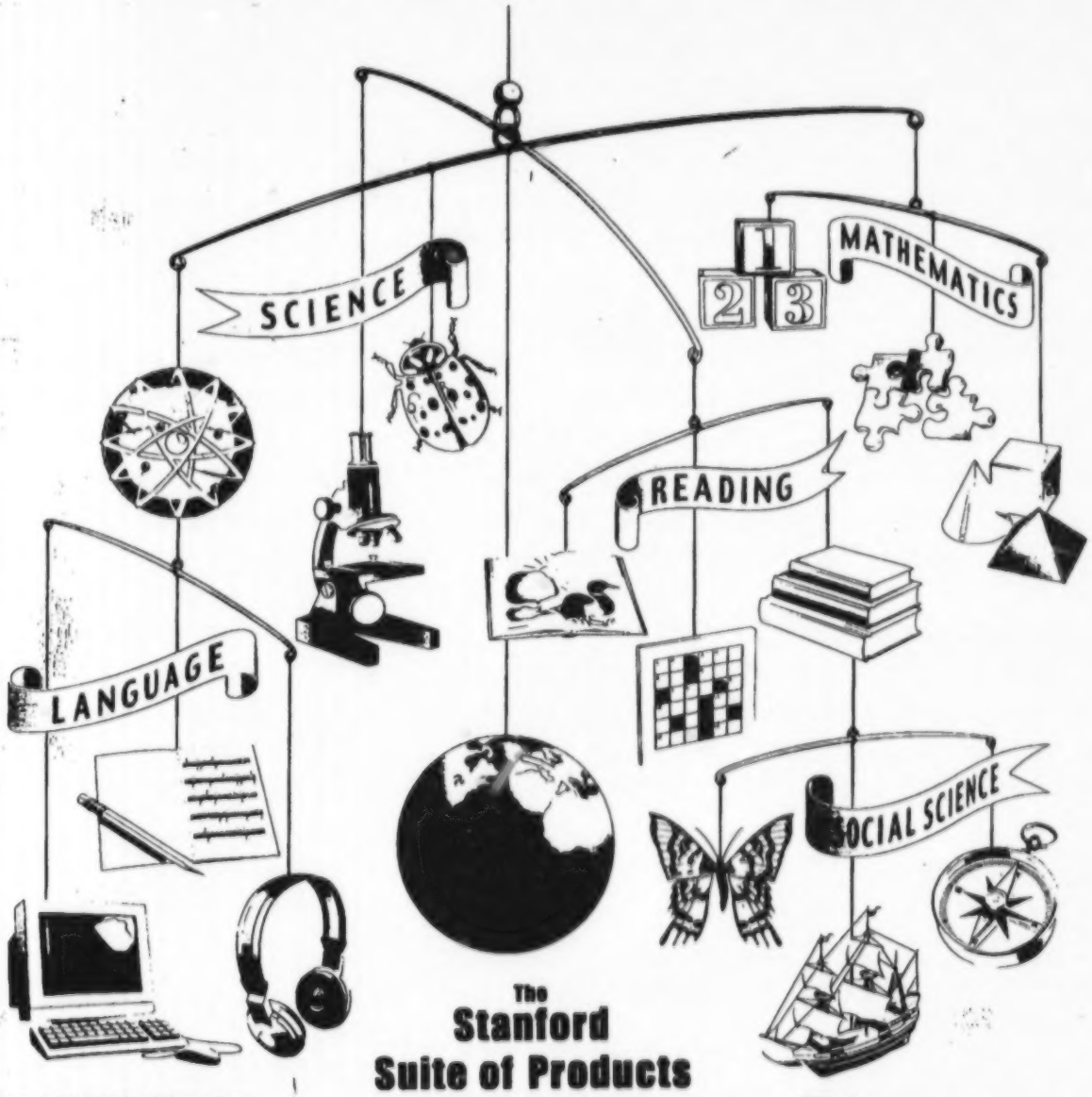

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